

# THE TIMES

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## The President goes on trial

### US faces political paralysis

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

THE trial to determine whether William Jefferson Clinton becomes the first President in American history to be removed from office by the Senate opened yesterday to solemn ceremonies not witnessed for 130 years.

But behind the stately scenes prescribed by the Constitution, party leaders' attempts to thrash out the rules of a trial with only one precedent remained in chaos. An appalled nation began last night to contemplate the prospect that the trial could spin into an uncontrollable partisan blood-bath, crippling Republicans as well as their presidential target, and paralysing the nation's politics.

The Senate was voting last night on procedures. The trial will open on Thursday and Republican senators said it could be over by February 12.

In "black robes with four gold bands on each arm, Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist took his seat in the centre of the Senate rostrum to begin the trial, calling each of the 100 senators by name to swear the oath.

Earlier, a procession of 13 Republican managers of the House of Representatives crossed Capitol Hill to the Senate to deliver the two articles of impeachment, led by the white-haired, bulky, stooping figure of Henry Hyde, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee. In dark suits and white shirts, they formed a solemn semi-circle in the well of the Senate floor as Mr Hyde slowly read the two articles.

Mr Clinton is charged with perjury in giving evidence about his affair with Monica Lewinsky in the Paula Jones civil trial and in the grand jury inquiry led by Kenneth Starr. He is also accused of bringing the office of the presidency into disrepute.

Strom Thurmond, 96, the oldest senator and the longest serving in US history, was given the honour of chairing the initial formalities. Banging the gavel repeatedly, in a quavering Southern accent he ordered an excited and restless Senate to "take your seats or go to the cloakroom".

This is a trial like no other. It has 100 jurors, who can over-ride their judge with a majority vote on any point. It will be held in front of the world's television cameras, which will also eagerly tap the mood of any juror leaving the Senate floor. The rules, by which it will be conducted are also in the hands of the jurors, and yesterday remained the focus of bitter fighting.

In one of the most perilous political gambles in Washington for years, Republican leaders face an "all or nothing" choice. They could hold a micro-trial of a few weeks, with no witnesses, leading to a quick vote. Judging by party whips' feelings, that would leave Mr Clinton in office, free of the Lewinsky albatross.

But a full-scale trial, complete with witnesses, may trigger an all-out war, unpredictable and uncontrollable. That could prove one of the greatest own-goals in American political history, alienating the public, jeopardising the party's control of the House and Senate in 2000, and scuppering its chances of putting a Republican in the White House.

The President's legal army yesterday rode rapidly to exploit that fear. Lawyers warned that "if the Senate called a single witness, 'all bets are off'. They swore to seek a delay in the start of the trial of up to seven months to take depositions. They would challenge the constitutionality of the process on every conceivable point, and call an unknown number of their own witnesses.

Monica Lewinsky is one of the greatest wild cards; she could be called as a witness by either side, and could damage either. In the glare of five television cameras, the Senate would have to question her on the details at the heart of the

perjury charge: whether the President directly touched her breasts and genitals, as she claims, contradicting his claim that he never had sexual relations with her.

The tactical quandary has plunged the normally sedate Senate into turmoil. George Washington, the first American President, called the Senate the saucer into which legislative acts were poured to cool, diffusing the boiling heat of

the popular passions in the House. But this week, the obstreperous House has revealed in a serene smugness. Having pulled the pin of the impeachment grenade, Republican House members have tossed it



Members of the House of Representatives arriving at the Senate chamber yesterday to deliver the impeachment resolution against President Clinton

onto the Senate floor, the President was sitting down for his weekly lunch with Vice-President Al Gore.

The White House was struggling yesterday to keep up a facade of business as usual. As the Chief Justice was walking

across Capitol Hill, leaving their senatorial counterparts to try to control the explosion.

Senate members were sitting down for their weekly lunch with Vice-President Al Gore.

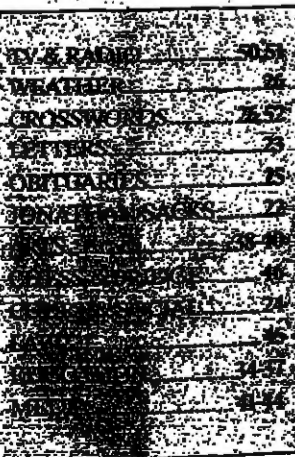
Senate members were sitting down for their weekly lunch with Vice-President Al Gore.

Trial opens, pages 2, 3  
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### Cancer gene identified

At least half of all cancers could become preventable as a result of the discovery of a gene that plays a vital role in the development of many forms of the disease.

When mutated, the gene not only loses the ability to kill cancer-forming cells but also speeds up their growth. The mutated gene has been linked to lung, breast and colon cancer. Now scientists hope to develop drugs to stop it functioning. Page 5



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### Building society puts questions to Mandelson

BY CAROLINE MERRILL AND MARK HENDERSON

PETER MANDELSON has been questioned by building society investigators as officials consider reporting him to police over allegations about his mortgage application.

The former Trade and Industry Secretary was interviewed to allow him to put his case to the Britannia Building Society's inquiry. A director is expected to decide today whether to hand the case to the police for possible prosecution.

The investigation by an "enforcement team" followed claims that Mr Mandelson misled the society when applying for the £150,000 mortgage on his home in Notting Hill, London, by failing to disclose the £37,000 loan from Geoffrey Robinson which eventually cost both men their jobs.

The man's findings, which are normally final, have been referred to board level. Further action is usually taken only when the society has suffered financial loss. Any police investigation would probably be handled by Staffordshire Police, the local force at Britannia.

Mr Mandelson said it had referred only a handful of cases to the police. It said it found a material discrepancy on a borrower's application form, then it would take up the matter with the borrower.

Mr Mandelson will today begin his official rehabilitation by holding talks for the Government with the man who used to be his German ministerial counterpart, Bodo Hombach, to examine common "third way" ground.

Mr Mandelson said it had referred only a handful of cases to the police. It said it found a material discrepancy on a borrower's application form, then it would take up the matter with the borrower.

### Bank rate cut for fourth time in a row

BY CAROLINE MERRILL AND MARK HENDERSON

HOMEOWNERS were given a boost yesterday as the Bank of England cut interest rates in its battle to head off recession (Janet Wright).

The Bank's Monetary Policy Committee cut base rates by a quarter point to 6 per cent — the fourth cut in successive months, which took rates back to where they were when Labour took office — and big mortgage lenders immediately followed suit.

The Nationwide said that with rates clearly on a downward trend, there would be more good news to come. However, the Cheltenham & Gloucester, which has five times as many savers as borrowers, said that it would not be able to carry on cutting its rates because while borrowers were doing "cartwheels of ecstasy", savers were left in despair.

Despite such misgivings, yesterday's move was broadly welcomed by business and industry. The MPC said that it had decided to cut rates again in view of evidence that the economy was slowing down and that the risks of inflationary wage demands were abating. Page 21

### Gladiator's baby dies in outbreak of meningitis

BY IAN MURRAY AND RUSSELL JENKINS

THE eight-month-old daughter of the former Olympic athlete Jody Simpson has died of meningitis.

Joan Mary Simpson is one of more than a dozen young children to have died in the current outbreak of the illness, which is one of the most severe in recent years.

Unofficial figures show that at least 25 people have died from the disease since Christmas, already more than in the same period last year, when the number of cases reported was the highest for fifty years.

After an epidemic just after the Second World War, cases fell annually until 1994, when numbers started to rise again. In 1997, 2,266 cases were notified, 243 of whom died. In the first 50 weeks of last year 1,929 cases were notified.

Julia Warren, of the National Meningitis Trust, said its helpline had been swamped with hundreds of people seeking advice over the past few days. "I have never known us to be so busy," she said.

Mrs Simpson, a Commonwealth gold medalist who became Nightshade on the television *Gladiators* team, and her husband Robin were too distressed to talk about their baby's death yesterday. A private funeral will take place in Birmingham next week.

Up to 3,000 youngsters in Poynton, Cheshire, are to be vaccinated against meningitis after a third confirmed case of a different form of the disease, which killed a local teenager.

They also found satellite telephones in the raids on two tourist hotels.

The same make of satellite telephone was allegedly used by Abu Hassan, the leader of the kidnap gang, who, five days after the alleged bombers were arrested, seized the Western tourists.

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### Yemen holds five Britons over 'bomb plot'

BY DANIEL MCGROVER IN ADEN AND RICHARD DOUG

FIVE suspected terrorists carrying British passports were being questioned in Yemen last night about the "British link" in an alleged plot to bomb targets in Aden.

All British passport holders and the Foreign Office is seeking consular access to them in jail in Aden.

The five, who came from the Birmingham area, travelled out separately to Yemen before the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Relatives of Mohsin Ghulain, 18, Shahid Butt, 33, Malik Nassar Hariri, 26, Samad Ahmed, 21, and Ghulam Hussein, 25, who are Muslims, said they

had no strong political or extremist views. Yemen officials deny that the five are being made scapegoats for recent terrorist attacks, including the kidnap and murder of western hostages.

One security source said: "These men were found with enough explosives to have caused massive deaths in Aden." When police burst into a room at the Al Wala hotel they allege that three men were assembling a bomb.

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	CH	BT	Saver		CH	BT	Saver
FRANCE	7	25	76%	IRELAND	7	23	70%
ITALY	8	36	78%	NETHERLANDS	7	29	76%
CHINA	27	109	75%	SPAIN	11	36	69%
SAUDI ARABIA	38	102	63%	USA	5	24	79%
ISRAEL	10	79	87%	CANADA	8	24	75%
GERMANY	6	29	79%	AUSTRALIA	7	49	86%
SOUTH AFRICA	28	80	85%	NEW ZEALAND	8	49	84%
MALAYSIA	17	77	78%	BRAZIL	30	132	77%
JAPAN	14	68	79%				

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All prices are per minute and include VAT. Some prices are subject to a pre-approval of credit and are subject to our 24 hour credit and fraud checks. 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# 'All bets off' in full-scale war

THE White House strategy for a full-scale trial of President Clinton is simple: "all bets are off," said its spokesman, Joe Lockhart. The result would be a long, complicated slog through a legal quagmire.

With little prospect of Mr Clinton being convicted by the requisite two thirds of the Senate, the White House had been hoping for a quick trial that would be abandoned after a test vote and lead to nothing more serious than a firm rebuke in the form of a censure.

But his lawyers have been proceeding on the basis that there might be a full-scale trial. As that appeared to be the spectacle in store last night, they were determined to mount a full defence.

There is no whit of half-measures. "Once you get into a trial, it's a war," said Alan Baron, a prosecutor who has been involved in the impeachment trials of lesser officials.

The tactics of Mr Clinton's legal team, including his old friend and personal attorney David Kendall and his White House lawyers Charles Ruff and Gregory Craig, seem likely to involve every weapon they can get their hands on.

Firstly, the constitutional basis of the trial may be challenged because the Articles of Impeachment were passed by the last Congress. The new one, the 106th, containing an increased number of Democrats, was sworn in this week.

Then, if the prosecution is calling witnesses, the defence will insist on drawing up its own list, to help to pick holes in accusations that Mr Clinton lied under oath about his relationship with Monica Lewinsky and obstructed justice in trying to cover it up.

There could follow a very lengthy process of taking depo-



White House risks hidden perils in slog through legal quagmire, writes Damian Whitworth in Washington

## THE DEFENCE

sitions from the witnesses and a period of discovery in which both sides disclose the evidence they intend to present.

Suddenly, the proceedings could take months even before Ms Lewinsky or Mr Clinton's secretary, Betty Currie, or his friend, Vernon Jordan, are summoned to the chamber of the Senate. If and when they do arrive, the cross-examination could be drawn-out, and extraordinary.

Mr Clinton has disputed Ms Lewinsky's account of their intimate relationship. Just how his lawyers approach her will be fascinating.

The White House was clearly trying to raise alarm by painting a picture of a trial stretching out interminably yesterday. But it is certain that a full trial could last many months. Less certain is who would be most damaged — the Republicans, who have pushed for the trial in the face of public opposition and might be hampered in the 2000 elections — or Mr Clinton. He could still be mortally wounded by any new discoveries emerging during the case.

The White House made a last-minute bid yesterday to keep witnesses and new evidence out of the trial by saying it would agree to base its defence solely on the case handed over by the House of Representatives.

"We're willing to have the case tried based on that [House] record," said Mr Lockhart. "If the process becomes wide open and they seek to go beyond the record and they seek to call witnesses, you will then get into a period where there will be motions, there will presumably be discovery and I can't tell you how long that process will take."

Mr Lockhart said that if the proposal were accepted, the White House would still contest the sex and cover-up allegations of prosecutors from the House of Representatives, based on the referral of the independent prosecutor Kenneth Starr. But the White House would not call witnesses to test their credibility.

If a full trial goes ahead it is unlikely that Mr Clinton will stand the stand, but it cannot be ruled out completely. The only certainty about the whole year-long saga has been its ability to surprise.



Chief Justice William Rehnquist swore in the 100 Senate jurors in yesterday's proceedings

## Republicans face their biggest gamble for decades

FROM BRONWEN MADDOX IN WASHINGTON

FOR a brief hour from 1pm yesterday, Republican senators assembled for the formal opening ceremony of the trial of President Clinton, before resuming their frantic attempts to thrash out its rules.

The 55 Republicans in the 100-strong Senate face one of the biggest political gambles that Washington has seen for decades.

If they curtail the trial to a mere few weeks, followed by a quick vote, it is a near-certainty that Bill Clinton

## THE PROSECUTION

will stay in office until his term ends in 2000.

But if they push for a full trial and insist on calling witnesses, "all bets are off," in the warning words of the White House. They would have started not just an unknown and cumbersome legal process, but a war which could sprawl over the rest of the millennium. It would be a fight to the death, which could see Mr Clinton become the first President to be impeached and thrown out of office.

But it could also backfire on Republicans, paralysing the country's legislation for another year, turning the public against them, and squandering the party's control of the House and Senate in the 2000 elections, as well as the chance of putting a Republican into the White House.

At worst, in the eyes of Mr Clinton's critics, he might eventually escape without even a censure or fine, at least partially vindicated by the Republicans' failure to muster a two-thirds majority of the Senate against him after such a bloody battle.

The tactical dilemma has thrown

the spotlight on Senate Majority Leader, Trent Lott of Mississippi, best known as a passionate conservative and a fierce critic of Mr Clinton, but who is now trying to broker a deal within his own party to back a short trial.

Yesterday it appeared that Mr Lott was making headway, with more conciliatory tones towards the notion of a short trial coming from the conservative wing.

But the crucial question of whether to call witnesses remains the sticking point, which could scupper his attempts at mediation.

Many Republicans were insisting yesterday that if this procedure is to be a proper trial, the Senate ought to call witnesses.

Those could include Mr Clinton himself, as well as Monica Lewinsky, Mr Clinton's secretary Betty Currie, and Mr Clinton's longtime friend and adviser Vernon Jordan.

On a field of such constitutional mud, the threats of alarmists on both sides cannot be dismissed: if war breaks out, it could last for much of the rest of the century.

Letters, page 23

## Johnson 'was not fit for the doghouse'

BY TIM HAMES

FOR all the salacious material and obvious difficulty in determining procedure, the Senate trial of Bill Clinton promises to be a positively dignified affair compared with the only other attempt to oust a President, the trial of Andrew Johnson in 1868.

That Senate melodrama came after a period of exceptionally bitter conflict between the President and Congress. Johnson was an utterly accidental occupant of the White House. A southern Democrat who nonetheless supported the Union in the Civil War, he had become Vice-President under the Republican Abraham Lincoln as part of a unity ticket for the election of 1864.

Lincoln's assassination elevated him to the presidency. His qualifications for high office were extremely modest. A low-born and uncouth figure, illiterate until his wife taught him to write, and with a passion for alcohol that matched Bill Clinton's enthusiasm for sex, he was as one contemporary commentator put it, "not fit for the doghouse, never mind the White House".

He also favoured an amicable settlement with the southern states and had little enthusiasm for allowing the newly freed slaves political power. That was precisely the opposite combination of policies to those held by the Republican majority in Congress.

On three occasions in less than six months they tried to impeach him. The first time their efforts fell short by one vote in the House of Representatives Judiciary Committee. The second attempt, four months later, passed in the committee but failed on the House floor.

The third time, however, after Johnson ignored the Tenure of Office Act, 1867, and improperly dismissed his Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, the House completed the whole process of impeachment in little more than 48 hours.

It then fell to the Senate to determine Johnson's future. It



Johnson: passion for alcohol

handled matters with a little more decorum and rather less haste than the House of Representatives. It was still, though, something less than a model of judicial behaviour.

After a 74-day trial, presided over by a shamelessly biased Chief Justice who favoured keeping Johnson because he thought this might win him, the Chief Justice, the Democratic Party nomination for President, the Senate pronounced its opinion. Johnson was saved by a single vote.

## ARTICLES OF IMPEACHMENT

## Accusations that led to Senate trial

TWO articles of impeachment were passed by the House of Representatives last month against President Clinton, and led to his trial in the Senate. Articles II and IV were rejected. Resolution impeaching William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, for high crimes and misdemeanors. Resolved, that William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, is impeached for high crimes and misdemeanors, and that the following articles of impeachment be exhibited to the United States Senate: Articles of impeachment exhibited by the House of Representatives of the United States of America in the name of itself and of the people of the United States of America against William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States of America, in maintenance and support of its impeachment against him for high crimes and misdemeanors.

**Article I:** In his conduct while President of the United States, William Jefferson Clinton, in violation of his constitutional oath faithfully to execute the office of the President of the United States, and to the best of his ability, preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States, and in violation of his constitutional duty to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, has wilfully corrupted and manipulated the judicial process of the United States for his personal gain and exonerations, impeding the administration of justice, in that: On August 17, 1998, [he] swore to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before a federal grand jury.

Contrary to that oath, [he] wilfully provided perjurious, false and misleading testimony to the grand jury concerning one or more of the following:

(1) the nature and details of his relationship with a subordinate government employee;

(2) prior perjurious, false and misleading testimony he gave in a federal civil rights action brought against him;

(3) prior false and misleading statements he allowed his attorney to make to a federal judge in that civil rights action; and

(4) his corrupt efforts to influence the testimony of witnesses and to impede the discovery of evidence in that civil rights action. In doing this, [he] has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the presidency, has betrayed his trust as President, and has acted in a manner subversive of the rule of law and justice, to the manifest injury of the people of the United States.

Wherefore, William Jefferson Clinton, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honour, trust or profit under the United States.

**Article II:** In his conduct, while President... William Jefferson Clinton, in violation of his constitutional oath... has prevented, obstructed, and impeded the administration of justice, and has to that end engaged personally, and through his subordinates and agents, in a course of conduct or scheme designed to delay, impede, cover up, and conceal the existence of evidence and testimony related to a federal civil rights action brought against him in a duly instituted judicial proceeding. The means used to implement this course of conduct or scheme included one or more of the following acts:

(1) On or about December 17, 1997, [he] corruptly en-

couraged a witness in a federal civil rights action brought against him to execute a sworn affidavit in that proceeding that he knew to be perjurious, false and misleading.

(2) On or about December 17, 1997, [he] corruptly encouraged a witness in a federal civil rights action brought against him to give perjurious, false and misleading testimony, if and when called to testify personally in that proceeding.

(3) On or about December 28, 1997, [he] corruptly engaged, in, encouraged, or supported a scheme to conceal evidence that had been subpoenaed in a federal civil rights action, brought against him in order to corruptly prevent the truthful testimony of that witness at that proceeding at a time when the truthful testimony of that witness would have been harmful to him.

(4) Beginning on or about December 7, 1997, and continuing through and including January 14, 1998, [he] intensified and succeeded in an effort to secure job assistance to a witness in a federal civil rights action brought against him in order to corruptly prevent the truthful testimony of that witness at that proceeding at a time when the truthful testimony of that witness would have been harmful to him.

(5) On January 17, 1998, at his deposition in a federal civil rights action brought against him, [he] corruptly allowed his attorney to make false and misleading statements to a federal judge characterising an affidavit in order to prevent questioning deemed relevant by the judge. Such false and misleading statements were subsequently acknowledged by his attorney in a communication to that judge.


(6) On or about January 18 and 20-21, 1998, [he] related a false and misleading account of events relevant to a federal civil rights action brought against him in that proceeding, in order to corruptly influence the testimony of that witness.

(7) On or about January 21, 23, and 26, 1998, [he] made false and misleading statements to potential witnesses in a federal grand jury proceeding in order to corruptly influence the testimony of those witnesses. The false and misleading statements made by [him] were repeated by witnesses to the grand jury, causing [it] to receive false and misleading information. In all of this, [he] has undermined the integrity of his office, has brought disrepute on the presidency, has betrayed his trust as President, and has acted in a manner subversive of the rule of law and justice, to the manifest injury to the people... Wherefore, William Jefferson Clinton, by such conduct, warrants impeachment and trial, and removal from office and disqualification to hold and enjoy any office of honour, trust or profit under the United States. (Reuters)

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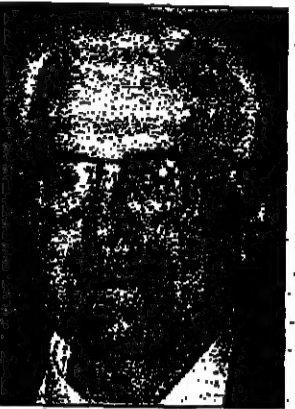
# World watches trial of century

STROM THURMOND



The liveliest figure and president of the Senate

HENRY HYDE

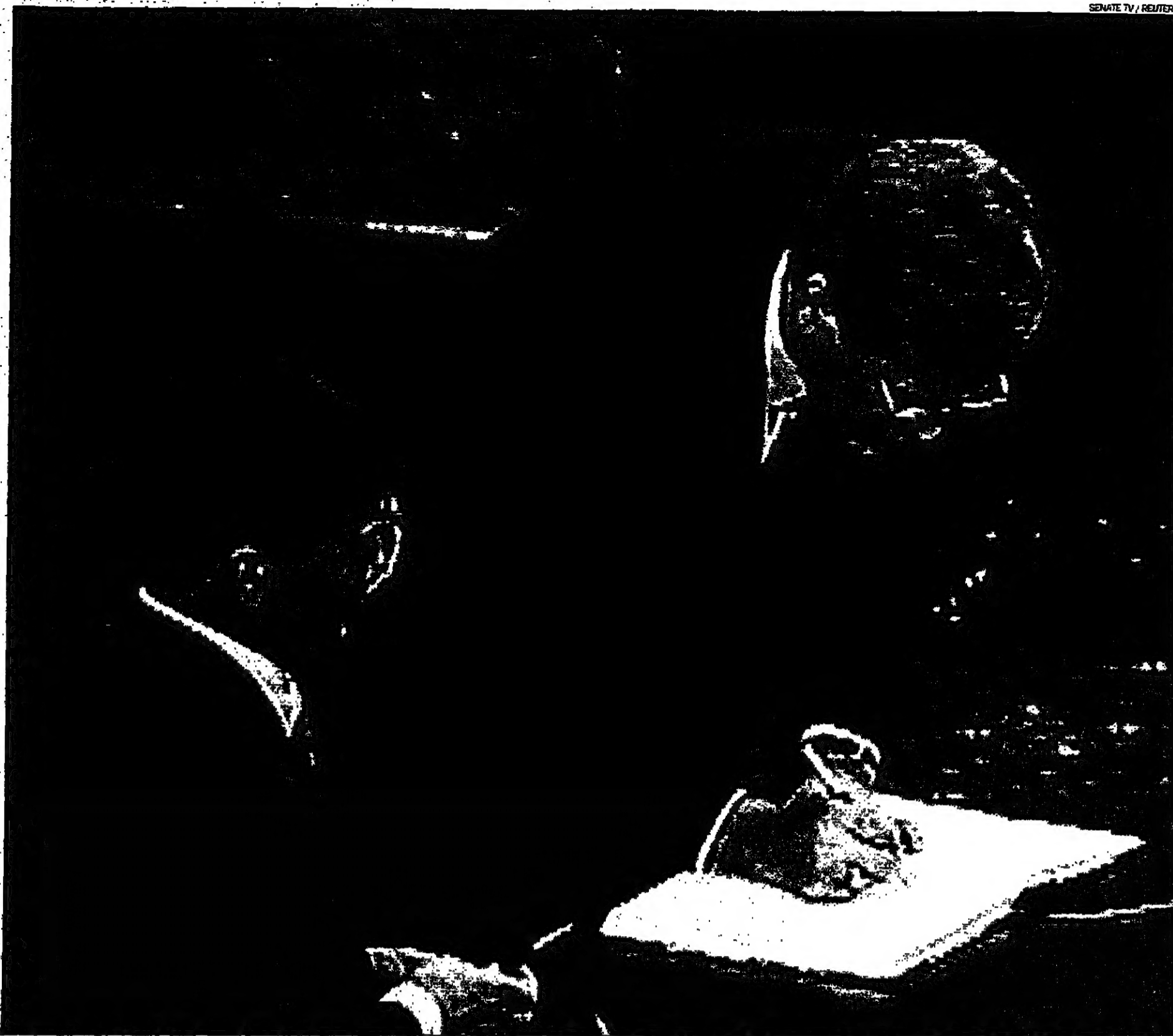


Events left him "depressed, a little bit jittery"

TRENT LOTT



Senate Majority Leader and critic of the President



Trent Lott signs the official oath book after being sworn in by Supreme Court Chief Justice William Rehnquist yesterday at the opening of President Clinton's trial

CLINTON TEAM



David Kendall, President Clinton's private attorney



Charles Ruff, the counsel for the White House

## Sense of disbelief prevails as solemn pageant unfolds

BY DAMIAN WHITWORTH  
IN WASHINGTON

IT IS only a short stroll across the Capitol from the House of Representatives to the Senate, but for 12 men yesterday it was a walk into history. For the first time in 131 years the trial of a sitting President opened amid rare Washington pageantry. The atmosphere was one of solemnity but also of disbelief. There were moments of mild absurdity.

These men represented those who had brought the country to this position by passing two articles of impeachment against Bill Clinton, 42nd President of the United States. The 13 were the "managers" who will be outlining the prosecution case, and yesterday they formally delivered the articles to the Senate to allow the trial to begin.

At any other time they would be anonymous members of the House, unknown to the rest of America, of interest only to those in Washington who sit on the same committees or run their errands along the corridors of the Hill. But as members of the Judiciary Committee that held hearings into Mr Clinton's conduct relating to his affair with Monica Lewinsky, they have become known to — though perhaps not loved by — millions of television viewers.

At their head was Henry

Hyde, a stooped bear of a man who has a face that appears often to be either smiling uneasily or wincing. A smile yesterday was unlikely, whatever his Democratic enemies might say. He confessed later that the events had left him "depressed, a little bit jittery". Among his 12 Republican disciples was James Sensenbrenner, a bulldog from Wisconsin who marched forward, his head up, chin out. If anyone got in his way on the walk to the Senate, he looked as though he would punch their lights out.

There too was Asa Hutchinson, a former US attorney from Arkansas who prosecuted the President's brother, Roger, for cocaine dealing. His own brother is a senator who will be weighing the charges he will be helping to present. He showed no concern, swaggering a little, his hand in his pocket.

As the group passed beneath the rotunda, some glanced upwards at Constantino Brumidi's fresco of the Apotheosis of Washington, showing the first President accompanied by Liberty, Victory and Fame. Under the great dome they were hushed over by an official of the House to the Sergeant at Arms of the Senate. It was a symbolic moment, the passing of their business from the lower House to the upper — the body that



A ticket for one of the 50 seats in the 596-seat Senate chamber to be handed out to members of the public each day

Washington compared with a saucer in which the decisions of the people's representatives, who could be an excitable lot, should be put to cool.

The 13 blinked in the flashlights of photographers, a group absent the only other time members of the House were sent on such a mission: the 1868 trial of Andrew Johnson. Aside from fashion and banks of lenses, the scene that greeted the managers as they shuffled into the chamber was very similar to Johnson's day. The senators sat at desks in rows like schoolboys, with a

few schoolgirls too this time. Up in the galleries the competition for seats was as intense as it was then. In 1848 the audience was notable for being packed with the mistresses of

senators dressed in their finery. It was harder to tell if such was the case this time but it appeared that there were more advisers taking up the spots allotted to the 100 members of

the jury. The public had been queuing since the chilly dawn for the 50 seats allowed them and, like the press, were given a few minutes each in the chamber to give as many people as possible a flavour of the historic proceedings.

"I wanted to see what could be the trial of the century," said Suzanne Garrow, 36, a lawyer from Northampton, Massachusetts. "I'm trying to check out the scene and be a part of history," said Steven Johnson, 31, of Washington.

By far the liveliest figure in the entire place was Strom

Thurmond, the 96-year-old from South Carolina, who is the longest-serving senator ever, and president pro-tempore of the Senate. It was a little confusing because everyone kept calling him President. Mr President himself is unlikely to appear.

Mr Thurmond hammered away with the gavel: "Either take your seats or be in the cloakroom," he barked. His petulant colleagues did not hurry and he rapped some more. Mr Thurmond handed over the policing to the Sergeant at Arms, Jim Ziglar. "Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! All persons are required to keep silence, on pain of imprisonment, while the House of Representatives is exhibiting the articles of impeachment against William Jefferson Clinton."

Eventually there was quiet. The sense of disbelief that this point had been reached was almost tangible. It had seemed impossible, months ago, that this sorry saga would ever end in trial, but the scandal has had as many comebacks as Mr Clinton himself.

Mr Hyde, who read out the articles of impeachment, was perhaps not the best choice for the task. He speaks too quickly and let the sentences run into each other. It was also hard to concentrate on all his talk of undermining the integrity of office and failure to execute the laws because he had a

cold and sniffed throughout. His left hand meanwhile conducted a search of his pockets for a handkerchief. One was eventually located and his nose was dabbed.

Television pundits had excitedly previewed the pageant as being similar to the State Opening of Parliament. But really they were talking things up. Although it is only a very short step across the road for the Chief Justice, William Rehnquist, from the Supreme Court to the Senate, the event was adjourned for nearly three hours for him to arrive.

Then somebody mentioned that the bars on his robes were inspired by a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. When he arrived for the swearing-in of the 100 senators, there was an anxious moment as it looked as though Mr Thurmond, who was uneasily clutching the desk, might fall over. Mr Rehnquist raised his hand to take the oath and Mr Thurmond leaned forward. Was this some new attempt at ceremony? Was the Chief Justice, no spring chicken himself, about to slap Mr Thurmond on the head. He did not. And the slow process of swearing in the 100 senators began.

The name of each was portentously intoned and they came forward to sign their names. A trial, the like of which no one alive has seen, was open.

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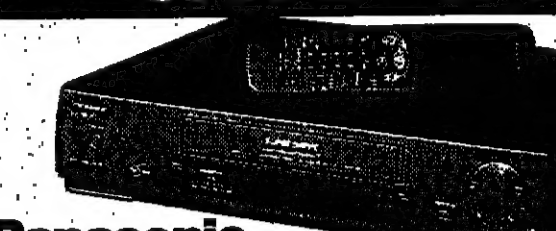
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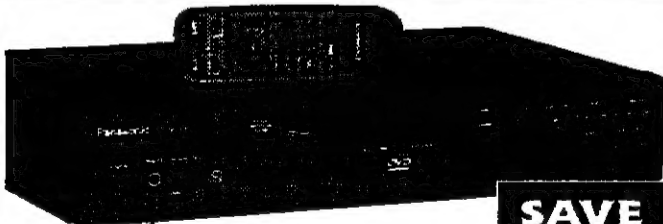
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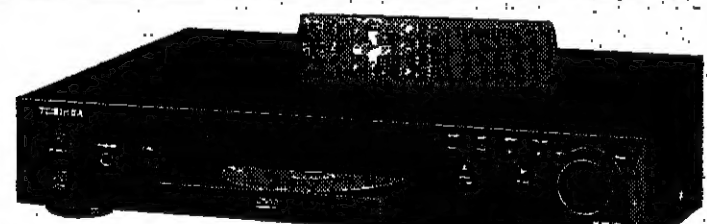
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Thomas Cook



# Gene find may lead to cancer prevention

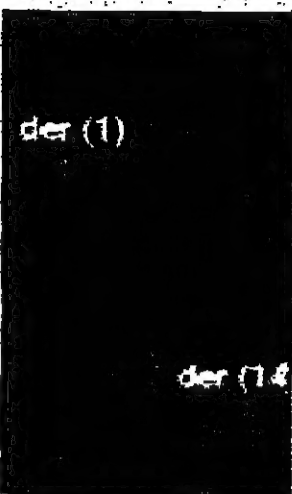
Researchers hope discovery will lead to a drug that can stop tumours developing, writes Sue Lappeman

SCIENTISTS have isolated a gene that plays a vital role in the development of many of the most common forms of cancer, including that of the lung, breast and colon. As a result, at least half of all cancers may eventually become preventable.

The isolation of the Bcl10 gene at the Institute of Cancer Research has been hailed as an historic discovery that will have a major impact on cancer research. Scientists hope the finding will lead to the development of a drug to stop the gene from functioning and prevent cancers from developing.

The mutated gene was discovered in an extremely rare type of tumour found in the stomach of a 75-year-old man being treated for a chest complaint in a Portsmouth hospital ten years ago. The unknown man, who has since died, was unknowingly suffering from B-cell non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, of which there are only about 20 known cases. His family was unaware of the impact his illness could have on the future treatment of cancer.

Martin Dyer, the research team leader at the institute, said that analysis of the man's tumour showed that, when mutated, the Bcl10 gene not



Villain of the piece: the mutant gene, der(14)

only lost the ability to kill off cancer-forming cells but speeded up their growth in tumours by transforming normal cells and making them malignant. The team then found the same mutated gene in some of the most common forms of cancer, among them those of the lung, breast and colon.

Dr Dyer said: "This is a very exciting discovery, which shows the value of studying rare cases of malignancy, as

the lessons learnt may be applicable to the more common forms of the disease."

He said the discovery of Bcl10 was extremely important to the understanding of the complex disease and ultimately to finding a cure for the "big" cancers that threatened the lives of so many people.

He said: "We would like to think that, if we can target the mutated forms of the protein and suppress their functions, and/or reintroduce the normal cell death-function - the killing function of the protein - then it could be useful therapeutically. That's our hope."

Even if the continuing research is successful, the development of a new drug would still be several years away.

Bcl10 is only the second gene to be discovered that is implicated in such a large number of cancers. The first was P53, which was abnormal in about 50 per cent of all cancers; preliminary results indicate that Bcl10 is contributing to the development of at least as many.

Professor Peter Garland, the institute's chief executive, said the discovery was a remarkable one that would have a major impact on the direction of cancer research.

He said: "In the future it may be possible to develop new treatments which will prevent the abnormal Bcl10 gene from functioning in a way which causes cancers to develop. For example, mutated Bcl10 may provide a suitable target for the design of a new cancer drug."

The research, a collaboration between the Institute of Cancer Research, the Leukaemia Research Fund, the Kay Kendall Leukaemia Fund and the Cancer Research Campaign, was accelerated by the recent development at the institute of a method for rapidly cloning the DNA sequence to allow access to a complete gene.



Valerie Beral: "We can reassure women that later illness is not because of the Pill"

## Injury link to breast cancer

By Nigel Hawkes  
SCIENCE EDITOR

INJURIES to the breast may contribute to the development of cancer, a new study has suggested.

Women with breast cancer were more than four times as likely to report that they had suffered breast injuries than healthy women, Jan Rigby, of the University of Lancaster, told the Royal Geographical Society - Institute of British Geographers conference.

In the study, 67 breast cancer patients between the ages of 50 and 64 were compared with healthy women of the

same age. Each was interviewed about her medical history, diet, smoking and drinking habits, and other factors.

A significant proportion of the cancer patients had experienced an accident or injury to the breast in the five years before cancer developed," Ms Rigby told the conference at Leicester University yesterday.

"Most of these were falls in the home where the breast hit something. A minority were the result of physical abuse. The injuries generally were serious enough to cause bruising or bleeding."

Among the breast cancer patients, 52 per cent reported breast injuries, while only 12 per cent of the healthy women did. Ms Rigby acknowledged the fact that women with cancer were more likely to remember a breast injury than were healthy women.

A spokeswoman for the National Breast Cancer Screening Programme expressed some doubt over the findings. "There have been extensive investigations of injuries to the breast, and there has never been a relationship with breast cancer found before," she said.

Conference reports, page 14

## Pill does no long-lasting damage to health

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

THERE is no long-term health danger from the Pill, research has shown. The largest and longest study among women using oral contraceptives has indicated that, ten years after stopping the Pill, they are no more likely to die from illness than those who have never taken it.

The 25-year study involved 46,000 women, two thirds of whom took the Pill. Although it bears out earlier studies, which show there is a slightly greater risk of Pill users developing some cancers or heart disease, it shows clearly that this risk disappears completely ten years after stopping the Pill.

"This must be reassuring to all women," said Clifford Kay, who set up the study for the Royal College of General Practitioners in 1968. "We have known there probably has always been a lurking fear that something dreadful would pop up among women on the Pill after ten, 20 or 25 years. This study shows that we don't need to worry about that any longer."

The women in the study were recruited by 1,400 GPs all over Britain during 1968 and 1969. Half of the women were then on the Pill, although a third of the others later took the contraceptive.

A detailed study of this kind could be carried out only in Britain because the NHS made it possible to track all the women and find out exactly who had been prescribed the Pill and for how long.

The average age of the women was 25 at the start of the survey. Most took the Pill for two years, although some were on it for up to 10 years and the average duration was five years. Regardless of how long they were on it, the findings were the same.

At the time the volunteers were recruited, the Pill usually being prescribed contained a medium level of oestrogen. The Pill being prescribed most often at present to the three

million women in Britain who are on it contains only half the amount used in the 1970s and is therefore even less likely to increase the risk of ill-effects for those taking it.

The researchers, from the Royal College and the Imperial Cancer Research Fund epidemiology unit in Oxford, traced the records of all those in the study who died up to the end of 1993. Of the 1,599 deaths, cancer was responsible for 829 deaths and heart disease or strokes for 380. Other deaths were due to a variety of diseases as well as accidents and suicide. One woman died in childbirth.

The 259 deaths from breast cancer and 51 from cervical cancer were slightly above the normal rate for those diseases, although the 55 deaths from ovarian cancer were fewer than expected, suggesting that the Pill provides some protection.

The vast majority of the women in the survey stopped taking the Pill at least 17 years ago, so the researchers can judge accurately whether there are any long-term effects.

Valerie Beral, director of the Oxford unit and author of the report, said the results were conclusive. "We can reassure women that, if they get some illness later in life, it is not because they once took the Pill," she said. "Our new figures show that, by the time women have used the Pill have been off it for ten years, their risk of developing these conditions is similar to what it would have been if they had never taken the Pill at all."

Toni Belfield, of the Family Planning Association, welcomed the report, which is published in the *British Medical Journal* today. She said that, from the 100,000 inquiries the association received each year, it was clear that many women were not confident about taking the Pill, so the findings should go some way to allaying their fears.



Tony Williams, left, and Martin Dyer, right, at the research laboratory

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# Keeping up with life on the corset index

Alexandra Frea on 50 years of official attempts to figure out just how much the times have changed

THEY were the days when people knew the really important things in life. The price of back-lacing corsets, iron bedsteads, condensed milk and unskinned wild rabbits were used in measuring inflation, and a wireless licence was the nearest thing to a subscription to the Internet.

A detailed insight into major trends in British life took the late 1940s as its starting point yesterday, as the official yearbook of the United Kingdom celebrated its 50th edition. In demonstrating that Britons are healthier and richer now, it also showed just how quickly the times have changed.

Nigel Pearce, editor of the current edition, *Britain 1999*, said that, in its early years, the book was used largely as a propaganda tool by British diplomats stationed overseas to paint a glowing, if not entirely accurate, picture of life back home. Embarrassing or unattractive facts, such as figures on pollution, might occasionally be "kept discreetly out of the book", he said.

Today it is said to be far more impartial. While it shows that we are now less likely to be killed on the roads, it admits that we will spend far more of our lives sitting in traffic jams and are many times more likely to come from a broken home.

One of the most revealing insights into how daily life and tastes have changed is provided by the basket of goods and services used to calculate the

## OH, I SAY

ONE quaint way in which social and cultural changes can be illustrated is in the prose styles used in the handbook over the decades. As you read this extract from *Britain 1956* on leisure pursuits, you can almost hear the clipped tones of a 1950s dinner-served BBC radio presenter.

"The public house now attracts a very wide circle of casual customers (both men and women) as well as many regulars, who meet for a drink and a chat, and perhaps to play some traditional public-house game such as darts. A new, and in some ways rival, feature of urban life, especially in London, is the coffee bar. A characteristic of many of these coffee bars, which stay open until late at night and are becoming increasingly popular as a rendezvous for young people, is their modern decor..."

retail price index. In 1947 it included: wild rabbits (unskinned), lard, condensed milk, back-lacing corsets, a gallon of lamp oil, an iron bedstead, a hair mattress, gramophone records (78s), a rubber-roller table machine, tin of disinfectant, a pound of soda and a wireless licence.

The basket for 1997 included burgers, fromage fraise, take-aways, tracksuit bottoms, a

smoke alarm, a microwave oven, a subscription to the Internet, contact lenses, a portable CD player, computer games, unleaded petrol and private medical insurance.

The way people spend their money also indicates changing priorities. A third of spending now goes on services, such as electricity, gas, water, postage, telephones, holidays, recreation and entertainment, compared with less than a tenth 50 years ago.

Mr Pearce said that, for him, the most significant change had been the way that advances in technology had caused electricity to take over virtually every aspect of our lives. He added: "What is also remarkable is the accelerating rate of change."

The book has been published virtually every year since 1946, with a few gaps in the 50s. When it first came out, the country was recovering from the war and rationing was still in place.

Since then, the most significant health statistic is that life expectancy has increased by about nine years. In 1948 40 per cent of deaths occurred under the age of 65. By 1996 the proportion had fallen to 17 per cent.

The widespread introduction of antibiotics is partly responsible for this, with the number of deaths from infectious diseases falling from more than 30,000 in 1948 to fewer than 4,000 in 1996.

Widespread immunisation for common diseases has also

had a huge impact, particularly on children's health. Between 1948 and 1968, notifications of measles were running at about 400,000 a year. In 1995, there were 7,447.

There have also been improvements to environmental health. In 1957 there was no fish population in the Thames between Kew in the West and Gravesend in the East, largely because output from London's

Victorian sewer system had starved the river of oxygen. After a concerted clean-up, there are now 116 species of fish in the upper Thames Estuary.

In home life, one in 13 families were headed by a single parent in 1971, compared with nearly one in four today. There has also been a steady rise in the number of one-person households, up from 14 per cent of all households in

1961 to 27 per cent in 1997.

Transport figures have changed enormously. In 1956 there were more than 3.75 million cars licensed to use Britain's roads and more than 1.25 million motorcycles. Ten years later the number of licensed cars was 9.5 million and, by 1996, it had leapt to 22 million, although the number of motorcycles, scooters and mopeds had fallen to 739,000. Much of

this astonishing growth in road traffic has been at the expense of the railways. The first handbook, published in 1946, states that "the four main railway companies had a total track mileage, including sidings, of about 50,000 miles." Today, the network is 20,000 miles.

More than half of the 17,000 copies of the handbook are still supplied to the Foreign Of-

fice, but its production has been moved from the Central Office of Information to the Office for National Statistics.

Reviewing the figures, Mr Pearce said: "It remains to be seen whether such a break-neck state of flux can be sustained into the next millennium or whether it will broaden out into a slower-paced era of measured planning and reflection."



A bread queue in 1946: rationing was still in place when the guide began. Today the shopping list has changed out of all recognition

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## Aussie taunts ruin Poms' paradise

BY A CORRESPONDENT

BRITONS who emigrate Down Under are being driven home by anglophobic Australians, a survey has found. An average of 240 Britons move to Australia each week, but at least 80 of them return because their neighbours are not as friendly as those in Ramsay Street.

The survey, carried out by the United Kingdom Settlers' Association in Melbourne, found that 39 per cent felt that anglophobia was rife in Australia, and that 31 per cent felt that their complaints were not taken as seriously as those made by other minorities.

Barry Hunter, of the UKSA, said that name-calling, hostile media coverage and demeaning stereotypes all played a part in ruining the great Australian dream.

"A lot of people call the British 'Poms', and there are many variations on that name: 'Whingeing Pommie bastard' is a pretty common one," he

said. "It's half-jocular and half-serious, but many people just don't like it."

Mr Hunter said that the English also took offence to such sayings as "Gimmie a beer, I'm as dry as a Pommie's bath towel," which implied that they didn't wash enough. "A few days ago... a man I had never seen before came up to me and said: 'Why don't you go back to England?' He then gave me the 'V' sign."

There are so many snide comments about the British in the media... hearing about Prince Edward's engagement, a radio reporter said: "And now we have to put up with yet another royal wedding..."

Penelope Lises, 25, who returned to Britain after two years in Australia, said: "When I first started looking for a job, no one would even give me an interview when they found out I was British. And there's all that whingeing Pommie stuff — constantly."

## End of the tinkling mobile

MOBILE phones are increasingly at risk of being damaged by male users who drop them in the lavatory while fiddling with zips and belts, repairers have revealed.

Hundreds are letting their phones slip through their fingers, according to Coverplan. The worst culprits are men who take the phones with them to the gym, in pubs and clubs, said the firm, which handles extended warranty repairs for Dixons.

Michael Marks, Coverplan's marketing director, said: "Amazingly, an increasing number of people admit they were talking on them in the loo. Young men should think again to stop their prize possession becoming ruined. Just two seconds underwater will wreck a mobile."

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# The producer Prince goes back to work

Engagement did not long distract Prince Edward from his other great love, Michael Harvey writes

FOR Prince Edward, work comes first. After all the engagement fuss and photocalls, he was back yesterday where he feels he belongs — behind his desk at Ardent Productions, his television production company.

Now that the announcement of his engagement to Sophie Rhys-Jones is out of the way, the Prince, who prefers to be called Edward Windsor, can concentrate on getting on with his job.

He told *The Times* yesterday that it was only after Ardent had "turned the corner" that he decided the time was right to propose. Like any modern professional couple, he and Miss Rhys-Jones wanted to wait until their careers were on an even keel.

"Basically there was no point in starting Ardent and starting married life at the

same time. That would have been silly," he said. "Apart from anything else we weren't ready then."

The Prince loves his work, but being a member of the Royal Family as well as a television producer does have its disadvantages. Many broadcasters are so keen to avoid the appearance of currying favour that his ideas — and programmes have to be much better than other producers'.

"In the [United] States, they tend to accept you on your credentials and don't get too hung-up about background. Over here people are more nervous about appearing to be in any way stacking assets," he said.

"Ardent does its level best not to trade on the name. But nine times out of ten the first idea which they want Ardent to make has got a royal connection."

"But once they have made the first one, they want to move on to other things. We have proved our ability to be able to make good programmes consistently and the broadcasters with whom we

have a good relationship understand that."

The Prince, 34, is confident that the company will succeed, despite five years of losses amounting to £1.5 million.

"We are about to enter the busiest year of our existence. It has been building over the last year, and broadcasters are now asking us to develop programmes," he said.

In 1998 the company almost broke even. With 40 programmes between the drawing board and completion in the next 18 months, 1999 should see Ardent in profit for the first time.

"We are looking at 20 to 25 hours of programmes in development," he said. "Suddenly we are hitting an enormous workload. We are talking to a number of different clients and broadcasters in Britain, Europe and America."

"You know that some are going to fall by the wayside, you know that some are going to get delayed, but that is more than we have ever had. We always wanted to be an international company. The development of clients and the connections overseas is where it is all beginning to happen."

The Prince, who is head of production, speaks with the enthusiasm of a man who has found his true vocation.

"Nothing is more fun than coming up with an idea, selling it to somebody, getting them to say yes and then going out and making it," he said. "It is great. You live on the edge and when it is all buzzing with people running around, it is a thoroughly exciting job."

It has not always been so much fun. Edward set up Ardent with a close friend, Eben Foggitt, in cramped offices in Charlotte Street in December 1993. By 1995 they had only got four hours of programmes on air. The following year saw the failure of the Channel 4 political sitcom *Andie's Bar*, which was almost universally panned. In 1997, business dipped alarmingly.

Last June Ardent moved to its new premises in the Old Stables at Bagshot Park, the 120-year-old mansion that will be the Prince's marital home. There is ample space for the several production offices, all of which have become hives of activity.

Last year began with the commissioning of *The Cater Street Hangman*, a pilot for a series of Victorian detective dramas. The murder mystery is the first of the Inspector Pitt novels by Anne Perry, whose

*Heavenly Creatures*, which starred Kate Winslet.

The *Cater Street* film was broadcast on ITV in September and in the US on the Arts and Entertainment channel just before Christmas. Three more two-hour mysteries are in development in a deal worth more than £1.5 million.

Such mainstream drama is where the Prince sees Ardent's future. He has no wish to provide further ammunition for those who say his company is trading off his name.

The Prince is still uncomfortable with media attention, despite his polished performance in front of the cameras at his engagement announcement, which he said went "as well as could be expected."

He wants to throw himself back into Ardent and plan as private a wedding as the public will allow. While reporters can no longer grill him about whether he will marry Miss Rhys-Jones, he said that they were bound to come up with a new question.

"I dread to think what it is going to be."



Prince Edward: "an enormous workload"

27 books are massively popular in America. Prince Edward spoke personally to the writer and has bought the rights to the entire series. Anne Perry is perhaps better known in Britain as the New Zealand teenager who helped to murder her best friend's mother in 1954. The crime inspired the film



Sophie Rhys-Jones returns to her office yesterday, insisting there is work to be done

## Confident fiancée charms the press pack

By CLAUDIA JOSEPH AND MICHAEL HARVEY

SOPHIE RHYS-JONES returned to work yesterday, eager to prove that, despite becoming a royal fiancée, it was business as usual.

She arrived at her office in Mayfair with a police escort to be greeted by hordes of reporters. While Prince Edward was hidden away in his television production offices at Bagshot Park, Surrey, she was lapping up the attention of the press.

Outside R-IH Public Relations, she said: "I have set this company up and I have commitments to clients and staff. I want to carry that on."

Her confident attitude was in contrast to that of the shy Lady Diana Spencer, with whom comparisons have inevitably been drawn.

Miss Rhys-Jones said she was looking forward to life in the public eye, although she was exhausted by the recent attention. Asked about how she would avoid the curse of previous royal weddings, she replied, smiling: "I will see about that when it happens."

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Liz Shankland with her husband, Gerald Toms

## Bride announces: give Mrs a miss

By SIMON DE BRUXELLES

A NEWLY married female executive has spent £40 on a newspaper advertisement attacking the "misguided fuddy-duddies" who disapprove of her keeping her maiden name.

Liz Shankland, 35, married Gerald Toms, 46, a police superintendent, two months ago. It is a second marriage for both. Ms Shankland decided to keep her own name both professionally and personally. But she became increasingly exasperated by people who insisted on addressing her as Mrs Gerald Toms.

She did not tell her hus-

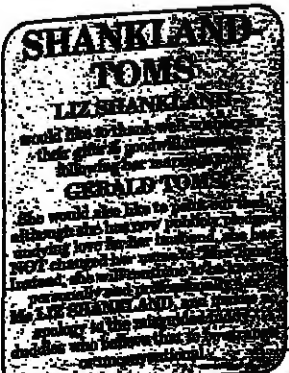
band, who is stationed at Cardiff, that she was placing the double-column advertisement in the Welsh newspaper *The Western Mail*.

After thanking friends for their gifts and goodwill messages, Ms Shankland wrote: "She would also like to point out that, although she has now publicly pledged undying love for her husband, she has not changed her name to Mrs Toms. Instead she will continue to be known — personally and professionally — as Ms Liz Shankland and makes no apology to the misguided fuddy-duddies who believe that to be strange or unconventional."

She said yesterday: "I'm no raving feminist, but I believe strongly that a woman should be able to retain her identity when she marries."

Mr Toms, who was responsible for security at last year's European Summit in Cardiff, said: "Liz is a professional in her own right and I understand and respect her decision."

John Morgan, associate editor of *GO*, who writes in *The Times* on etiquette, said: "She is entitled to call herself by whatever name she wants."



The advert placed in *The Western Mail*



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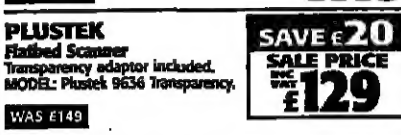
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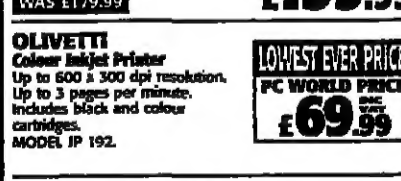
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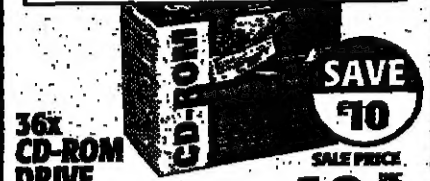


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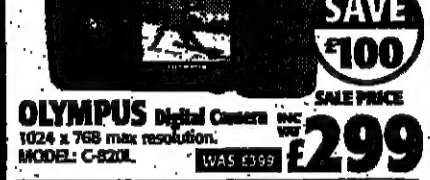
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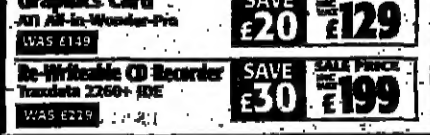
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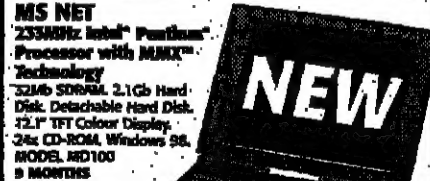


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# Desert Fox air crew return to their families

THE British servicemen and women who took part in the airstrikes against Iraq spoke of the terror of combat and their fear of hitting civilian targets, as they arrived back in Scotland yesterday.

After spending two months in the Gulf for Operation Desert Fox, the 150 members of 12 Squadron, the RAF Tornado Fighters, returned to their base at Lossiemouth, Moray, to an emotional welcome.

Waiting on the Tarmac was the Defence Secretary, George Robertson, and air force chiefs, alongside wives, girlfriends and children. Despite the freezing drizzle, the families wore broad smiles as their loved ones stepped off the Lockheed Tristar transport aircraft to the sound of a piper playing *Scotland the Brave*. The mood on the eight-hour flight from Al-Jalibiyah in Kuwait had been euphoric, one pilot said.

Families clapped and cheered when the Tristar came into view in the blustery skies over Lossiemouth, escorted by two Tornado bombers from the 617 Dam Buster Squadron. It landed at 12.22pm, two minutes behind schedule, after a journey of over 3,000 miles.

Wing Commander Steve Barnes, 36, was first off the plane. After shaking hands with Mr Robertson he turned to embrace his wife, Zoë, 28, whom he last saw in October. She said later: "My face ached because I had been smiling so much. It was so exciting seeing all the guys come back fit and well."

Moments later wives and children ran forward to greet husbands and fathers. Squadron Leader Andy Box, 34, a senior engineer, said that being reunited with his family felt "just like Christmas when you're a four-year-old".

Embracing his wife, Lesley, 35, and children, Emma, 2, and Christopher, 4, he said: "We are going to have Christmas all over again. It's wonderful to be back."

Bethany Sleight, 2, was refusing to let go of her father, Sergeant Tim Sleight, 33, also an engineer. Speechless and grinning, she clung to his neck as he hugged his wife Jo, 29, and son Sam, four.

The squadron flew 28 sorties over Iraq during Desert Fox.

## Shirley English sees emotional homecoming of RAF personnel to their base in Scotland

with 75 per cent accuracy. The crew now have just over two weeks' leave before returning to duties at Lossiemouth and possibly active service in Iraq.

Wing Commander Barnes, who flew three sorties, praised his team, many of whom had not been shot at before and were very nervous. "We all felt an enormous sense of responsibility. We could not afford to lose anyone."

"All the world's press was watching over this mission. We could not accept any civilian damage. That was a very real concern for us."

Combat was frightening, he said. "It's a mixture of fear and adrenalin and not an experience you enjoy."

One pilot, who cannot be named for security reasons, said flying over Iraq with anti-aircraft missiles exploding around his Tornado was terrifying. "It was my first active combat, something I have trained for for nine years. It was quite surreal. You could see what looked like fireworks flashing outside but could hear nothing and then they would explode. The first time it happened it took my breath away for a few minutes."

Flying Officer Kate Ansell, 23, from Bristol, a navigation intelligence specialist, told how after briefing one air crew about their mission, she was handed letters by three men to give to loved ones if they failed to return. "It was a huge relief to count them all back safely," she said.

Personnel celebrated Christmas with an *It's A Knockout* competition at the base, but one navigator said it was "pretty miserable". He added that, after returning from missions, the adrenalin was rushing and "all we wanted was a few beers. Instead we had to make do with some cheesy television

and a book. I can't wait to hit the town tonight."

Mr Robertson paid tribute to the "invaluable and decisive part" played by the squadron in "their accurate and precise attacks against Saddam Hussein's war machine". That was the only language the dictator understood. His ability to threaten his neighbours had been curtailed.

He added: "Britain is proud of these forces who risked their lives to uphold international law and order and ensure the safety of the Gulf region."

Tony Blair is expected to visit the Lossiemouth base later this month. The British presence in the Gulf is being maintained by two squadrons from RAF Marham in Norfolk, which will continue Operation Southern Watch over the Iraqi no-fly zone.



An RAF serviceman is greeted by his family at Lossiemouth yesterday. The 150 personnel returning from Kuwait had not seen relatives for two months



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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Dome link workers accused

Electricians working on the £2.85 billion Jubilee Line Underground extension between Central London and the Millennium Dome were accused of holding London Transport to ransom yesterday by demanding £5,000 bonuses to finish the project by October. The 500 electricians stand to gain up to £3 million if their demands are met by the project contractor Drake & Scull. Protracted talks between the two sides have led to claims of poor productivity by the electricians, who earn up to £1,150 a week.

### Bank debugs

The Royal Bank of Scotland is to close its 1,500 cash machines on Sunday, from early morning for at least 10 hours, to install computer software that will combat any potential problems caused by the millennium bug.

### Murder charge

Ibrahim Aderdour, 40, is to appear in court today, charged with the murder of his wife, Sophie, 31, their 16-month-old daughter and in-laws John Trant, 71, and his wife, Vivien, 57, who were stabbed to death in the Aderdours' North London home in October 1995.

### Labour drive

The Labour Party is to seek recruits through direct mail, door drops, telephone calls and television and Internet marketing. The campaign, by an agency, will try to reverse a membership decline from 405,000 in 1997 to 392,000.

### Mistaken identity

Supermarket staff were sceptical when a 6ft man handed over a credit card in the name of Mr Chi Chiu Lau. Allan Office, 45, of Sunderland, was put on 12 months' probation by South Tyneside magistrates for receiving stolen goods.

## Cathedral enters the holy day market

By RUTH GLEDHILL  
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

SALISBURY Cathedral is entering the holiday market with themed "heritage" breaks featuring tours to historic sites and visits to services.

The three-day breaks, which start from £169, will include a summer solstice champagne breakfast, when tourists will be able to watch the sun rise from the top of the cathedral tower.

A candlelit Mass at the Wiltshire cathedral is also on offer under the proposals, which are an attempt to make extra money during the tourist low season.

Barry Mason, head of visitor services, said: "The breaks are all about getting people into the cathedral and into Salisbury in off-peak times."

"At the moment tour companies bring visitors to the city and the cathedral for just a quick tour. We want to keep them here for longer."

"I think we have gone about it in the right way. We have already had a great response, with about half the places taken."

"The cathedral is seeing a new era of fighting for tourist money and we are trying to react to the shifting demands of holidaymakers."

The cathedral's voluntary and professional blue-badge guides will conduct tourists round during the breaks, which are titled *Salisbury Authors and Artists, Castles, Cathedrals and Commoners, and Easter in Salisbury*.

A *Tale of Two Cities* will feature visits to the nearby cathedral city of Winchester, in Hampshire.

Mr Mason said: "We are recognising more and more that people don't want to do just one thing, but are interested in different permutations. So we are looking at all sorts of partnerships to explore all sorts of ideas."



# Mandelson and his little local difficulty

Dominic Kennedy reports on an alleged vendetta against MP's former agent, and a trial dropped at the last minute

PETER MANDELSON changed his written evidence to give a fuller account of a London meeting with Bernard Carr, his former Hartlepool agent, before Mr Carr's fraud trial collapsed costing £100,000 and provoking new police inquiries.

Mr Mandelson, then Minister without Portfolio, was so keen to avoid having to give evidence in person that he incurred considerable cost in employing a solicitor.

The disclosure came as it emerged that Mr Mandelson has since discussed the collapse of the case with the Attorney-General, the Home Office and Cleveland Police.

Mr Carr's aborted fraud case has left a legacy of bitterness, suspicion and blame in Hartlepool, the constituency where Mr Mandelson returned to public duty yesterday for the first time since resigning as Trade and Industry Secretary on December 23.

The last thing Mr Mandelson needs as he tries to plan his return to mainstream politics is trouble on a second front. But what appeared to be a little local difficulty involving a friend with whom he stayed during the early days of his candidacy in the town is threatening to become another source of discomfort.

The case against Mr Carr, the MP's election agent in 1992, who was accused of fiddling council expenses, was eagerly awaited because of the likely prospect that Mr Mandelson would be called as a witness. But minutes before the case was due to start at Teesside Crown Court last year it was dropped by the Crown Prosecution Service. The controversy, however, has failed to die. The Carr affair has already been blamed for a backlash against Labour in Hartlepool where the council suffered huge losses in last May's elections.

Intrigue grew this weekend when Richard Brunstrom, the Assistant Chief Constable of Cleveland, issued a highly unusual statement saying: "Police inquiries arising from the collapse of the trial in February 1998 have not been completed. It is a complicated situation which merits careful and measured consideration."

Mr Carr also had a charge of gross indecency in a public lavatory dropped by Hartlepool Magistrates

at the request of the Crown Prosecution Service in December 1997. After the collapse of the trial Mr Mandelson angrily criticised police incompetence.

In police circles there is resentment that Mr Mandelson changed his written evidence a month before the fraud case came to court. He apparently wanted to make clear that Mr Carr did discuss housing matters — not just Labour Party business — during a meeting in London for which the councillor, then Hartlepool's borough housing chairman, claimed expenses.

Mr Mandelson's supporters insist that the MP gave a full account during his hour-long interview with detectives but that the witness statement he signed, written by the police officers, may well have excluded



Carr: several unhappy events

some matters because it was only a one-page summary.

The pressure on police to act will grow after Bill Iseley, Hartlepool Council's former Labour chief whip, said yesterday that it was known at a local government conference in Scarborough the weekend before the trial that the case might collapse. "I did hear from somebody that they had heard that the thing might collapse," Mr Iseley said.

Mr Mandelson's supporters say that people became confused because they knew the MP was not needed to give evidence and through Chinese whispers this changed to an assumption that the case was being dropped. Mr Iseley, though, says he did expect that Mr Mandelson would be in court.

Mr Carr was charged with deception after a colourful escapade when

the bachelor visited London in August 1996 to compete in *The Daily Telegraph's* worst cook competition. He came third with a stomach-churning recipe of turnip and fish soup with fishfinger croutons.

Unfortunately, another councillor spotted the report in the newspaper and, since the finalists enjoyed an all-expenses-paid trip to London, queried why he claimed £150 expenses from the council.

Mr Carr repaid the money but the fraud squad was called in and he was charged with seven counts of deception totalling £666 and one of attempted deception, despite making strenuous denials during long police interviews.

Mr Carr justified claiming expenses by saying that while in the capital he saw Mr Mandelson to discuss issues relating to his duties as housing chairman.

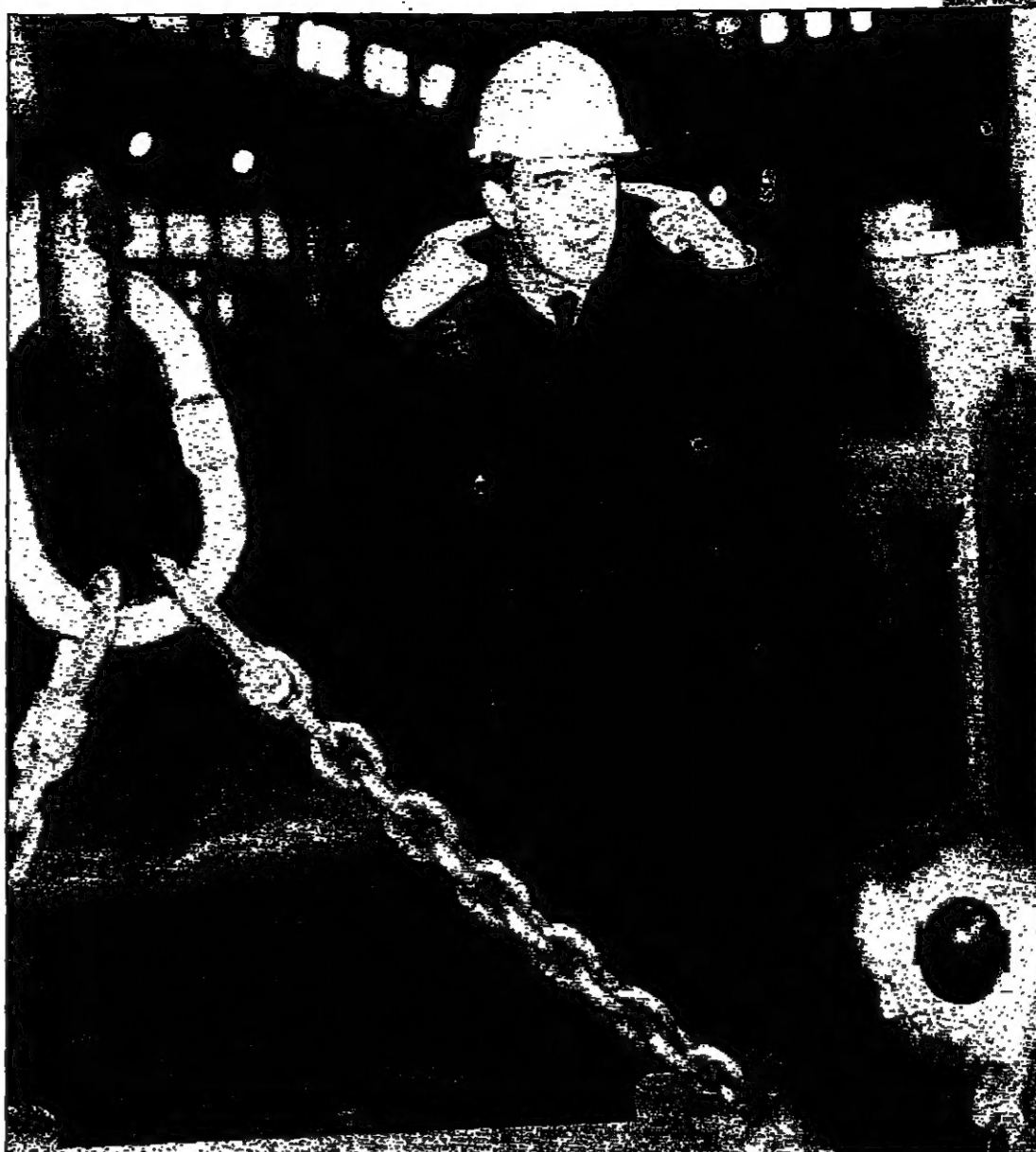
The fraud squad travelled to London to interview Mr Mandelson and the MP signed a statement of about five paragraphs summing up his evidence. Mr Mandelson was then given warning that he would be called as a witness in the fraud trial, which would be bound to attract media attention at a time when he was correctly being tipped for promotion to the Cabinet.

Mr Mandelson spent the weeks before the trial asking why he was wanted, being asked about a matter on which he insisted he knew nothing. Mr Carr's defence team, though, wanted to cross-examine Mr Mandelson about the police statements he had signed which, according to a police source suggested their London meeting had been about Labour Party matters.

About a month before the trial date, Mr Mandelson swore an expanded written version of the events. This made clear that Mr Carr came to talk about an election hearing in Hartlepool, but crucially that they also talked about dilapidated houses that Mr Mandelson wanted the council to act on.

Minutes before the trial was due to begin Jeremy Richardson, the prosecution barrister, interviewed Brian Hanson, the long-serving council leader, and John Walton, the respected and experienced finance officer, about expenses procedures. The CPS then decided to drop

the charges, claiming answers received that morning directly contradicted earlier evidence from the council, seriously weakening its criminal case against Mr Carr. Both council chiefs strongly deny that they ever changed their evidence.



Peter Mandelson at Clydesdale Forge Company yesterday on his first constituency visit since resigning

the charges, claiming answers received that morning directly contradicted earlier evidence from the council, seriously weakening its criminal case against Mr Carr. Both council chiefs strongly deny that they ever changed their evidence.

CPS sources maintain that the dropping of the case had nothing to do with the second version of Mr Mandelson's evidence.

Some people in Hartlepool feel there was a vendetta against Mr Carr and that the deception charges,

the alerting of the police to the "rot-tagging" incident and a rent row which led to a repossession order on his flat are evidence that enemies were trying to destroy his bid to leave the council.

There is even suspicion as to whether the police are making more inquiries. Mr Mandelson's supporters believe the police are creating a smokescreen to draw attention from their alleged bungling of the case.

Leading article, page 23

## Heartfelt return of prodigal son

By Dominic Kennedy

PETER MANDELSON returned to his main job yesterday, tending to his constituents of Hartlepool, and said that he was glad to be back in a place where you knew who your friends were.

"It's nice to be back among people who know me and take me for what I am, who support me and keep telling me to smile and keep my chin up," he said. "It's a great town this, with no-nonsense attitudes. People are not carried away by media hype one way or the other. They take a very sensible, sober view of the world."

"That's why, when you tumble out of the fast political world of London, it always seems much safer and more secure in Hartlepool, where you know who your friends are."

Mr Mandelson spent the day listening to the woes of constituents at his regular surgery, and meeting captains of what is left of Hartlepool's industry. The fallen Trade Secretary, who was on the guest list for the Prince of Wales's 50th birthday party at Highgrove, is filling his diary with less hectic invitations.

Yesterday, touring a metal works in Hartlepool run by Caparo, the steel group owned by the Labour peer Lord Paul, he was invited to the opening of a new Russian forging press. Far from feeling like a Cinderella, Mr Mandelson looked relieved to be back in the town, where he has been treated like a favourite, if prodigal, son.

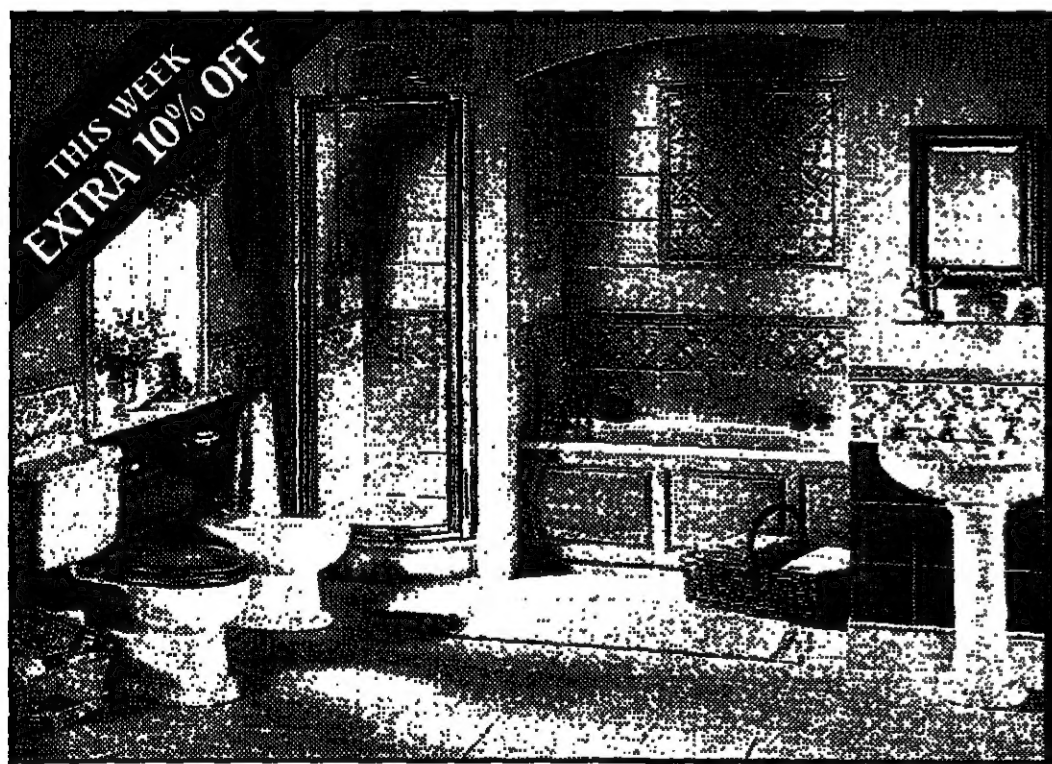
Steve Wallace, his agent, said that they had been continually stopped and welcomed. "It's a very canny town: once they decide you are one of our own, they will support you."

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## IRA warns of frustration

By Martin Fletcher, Chief Ireland Correspondent

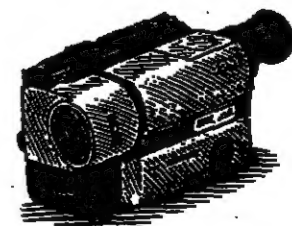
THE IRA issued a new year statement yesterday that gave a warning of "growing frustration" within the republican movement. It accused Unionist leaders of resurrecting the same preconditions that caused the collapse of its last ceasefire in 1996.

The statement was condemned by Unionists, who accused the IRA of threatening a return to violence unless Unionists dropped their demand that the republicans begin disarmament before Sinn Féin can be admitted to Northern Ireland's new Assembly in the spring.

Michael McGimpsey, a leading Ulster Unionist Party assemblyman, said that the IRA was attempting to blackmail Unionists. Peter Robinson, deputy leader of the Democratic Unionist Party, called the statement a blatant threat. Billy Hutchinson, of the Progressive Unionist Party, said the peace process could yet implode if the decommissioning issue was not surmounted.

The IRA's statement, published in the republican newspaper *An Phoblacht*, said that, nine months after the accord, Unionists were doing their best to prevent it being implemented because they remained "wedded to the politics of domination and inequality". A loyalist paramilitary sentenced to a total of 400 years in prison was released from the Maze yesterday after serving ten years. Denis McLean, of the Ulster Volunteer Force, was convicted of 44 offences including three murders, six attempted murders and the manslaughter of a policewoman.

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# New school tables to show where cash goes

Education authorities must account for spending, writes Roland Watson

PARENTS will be able to compare how local education authorities divide their cash between the classroom and administration in new league tables designed to ensure that more money is spent on pupils.

David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, will announce the initiative today in a speech aimed at spearheading the Government's new year programme.

He will also outline new rules giving school inspectors the power to put specific responsibilities out to tender if authorities are found to be failing. It could lead to private firms, charities or neighbouring authorities taking over responsibility for literacy and numeracy teaching, strategies to improve failing schools, or help for socially excluded children.

The details will come as Mr Blunkett becomes the first senior Cabinet minister to attempt to drag the focus away from the fallout of the Mandelson home-loan affair and on to

policy issues. He will also attempt to quash the impression that the departure of new Labour's leading moderniser from the Cabinet has opened the way for a return to more traditional Labour values, a mood fuelled by John Prescott, the Deputy Prime Minister.

Mr Blunkett will tell the North of England Education Conference that modernisation is the only way to achieve traditional Labour aspirations such as greater equality, a better education and health service and reduced crime.

He will call for a "bold and radical" approach to delivering the reform and innovation needed on the brink of the millennium, including more use of money from the private sector in schools and transport.

"It means taking decisive action where public services are not delivering, whether we are talking about LEAs, schools, hospitals or welfare provision," he will say.

Hackney, in East London, may provide the first opportunity.

Blunkett: new league  
tables initiative

An "improvement team" is already in place, but continuing friction between the council leadership and a new chief education officer has led to speculation that the authority will fall a second inspection soon.

Mr Blunkett's speech, to local education authority leaders in the North of England, has been recast to include a modernising message for those La-

bour MPs and ministers minded to exploit Mr Mandelson's demise as a way of redirecting the Government.

Speeches by other Cabinet heavyweights will follow. Mr Prescott, Gordon Brown, the Chancellor, Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, and Jack Straw, the Home Secretary, will all reinforce the message that the Government will maintain its election promise to govern as new Labour.

The league tables to be announced by Mr Blunkett will give for the first time a comparison of how authorities divide their budgets between administering and delivering services.

Although they will take into account the differing demands of different areas, Mr Blunkett wants to show up those authorities with inflated administration bills as a way of pressuring them to put more into classrooms. He will say: "We cannot afford to let children down."

Education, pages 34-37



Pinochet: awaits ruling

## US review may bring Pinochet to trial

BY A CORRESPONDENT

THE American Justice Department said yesterday that it was investigating General Augusto Pinochet to see whether the former Chilean dictator could be tried in the United States.

Janet Reno, the Attorney General, said that her department's investigation of a fatal car bombing in Washington in 1976 had not been closed. The bombing killed Orlando Letelier, the former Chilean Ambassador and a prominent Pinochet critic, and his colleague, Ronni Moffitt, an American citizen. When asked if General Pinochet, 83, could ever be brought to trial in the United States, Ms Reno replied: "That's what we have under review."

A Chilean intelligence operative, Michael Townley, was convicted in the case. Moffitt's relatives have been pressing for a prosecution of General Pinochet, but the United States has so far remained cautious about becoming involved in the legal wrangle over his status in Britain, where he has been held since October 16 pending a decision on whether he can be extradited to Spain on human rights charges.

## Football chief is accused of arson

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

A WEALTHY businessman who controlled Doncaster Rovers hired a former soldier to burn down the football club's main stand, a court was told yesterday. Ken Richardson, who described himself as the club's benefactor, was said to have been linked to a mobile telephone apparently discarded by the arsonists amid the charred wreckage at the Belle Vue ground.

The find led to the arrest of Alan Kristiansen, a private investigator, who told police that he had been hired by Mr Richardson, a shareholder at the club and heavily involved in its management.

Mr Richardson, 60, made his fortune in the waste-paper business who lives on the Isle of Man. When questioned by police, he suggested that the blaze could have been the work of one of his enemies. He denies conspiracy to commit arson.

Roger Keen, QC, for the prosecution, said that investigation into the fire on June 29, 1995, showed that someone had splashed petrol and then set fire to it. The arsonists left behind four empty fuel cans, a rucksack and a mobile phone. Kristiansen has admitted his part in the offence and is the principal witness against Mr Richardson, Sheffield Crown Court was told.

Mr Keen said that for some time Mr Richardson had been heavily involved in the club's affairs. Mr Keen said that Mr Richardson's motive might remain secret but he suggested that the ground was an area of growing revenue potential. "It may emerge that the motive was a financial one," he said.

The trial continues.

## Families asked to wash patients

BY HELEN JOHNSTONE

PATIENTS' relatives and friends have been asked by a hospital trust to help to feed, wash and shave them because of a shortage of nurses.

Notices are being handed to visitors at Queen Alexandra Hospital and St Mary's Hospital in Portsmouth, Hampshire, asking for volunteers. Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust runs the two acute hospitals, with 1,100 beds, and has some 20 nursing vacancies.

Surgeons are assisting doctors in medical wards who are struggling to cope: both hospitals have been overwhelmed with people suffering respiratory, heart and urinary problems. The Department of Health

said that an unusually high demand for medical beds in Portsmouth had prompted the trust to seek volunteers for non-clinical tasks so that nurses could provide medical care. A spokesman said: "As long as the relatives are happy and it is not compromising patient care, it is acceptable."

Doug Dunn, of Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Community Health Council, said that pressure on hospital staff this winter was the worst he could recall. He thought the request for help was reasonable. The trust said yesterday it had had a positive response from most of the people involved.

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# Fast boat beats racing cars, says Mansell

Ex-Formula One world champion pays £1.3m for ocean-going luxury yacht, reports Adam Sherwin

NIGEL MANSELL has swapped racing cars for the "motor yacht of the millennium" — and says he gets more satisfaction out of boating than Formula One.

The former world champion driver has paid £1.3 million for a 74ft vessel, the most expensive on display at the 48th London International Boat Show, which opens at Earls Court in London today.

Mansell intends to take the Manhattan 74, which sleeps eight in complete comfort, on a

voyage around the world, which could last for a year. "I need to spend more time on the water because I suffer in the cold," he said.

"I already have a 34ft boat, but that's a day boat. You can live full-time on this boat — it's bigger than five houses."

The Manhattan 74 is produced by Sunseeker International, a British company based in Dorset. The vessel contains all home comforts for life on the high seas: the port side houses an elevated dining

area that seats eight and, below decks, a master stateroom has a queen-size bed, sofa and an ensuite shower with toilet. "Two twin guest cabins lead off from the guest stateroom, while the crew cabin contains two berths with wardrobe and vanity unit. The company has orders for 100 of the boats."

Mansell will use the vessel to explore sunnier climes. He said: "We will moor it at Fort Lauderdale, Miami, and take it for a cruise around the Bahamas. At other times we might dock it near La Manga in Spain."

Mansell's boat took three months to build and possesses the latest design in hydrodynamic hulls. The manufacturers claim a maximum speed of 35 knots, but Mansell thinks he can squeeze some more out of his new vessel.

He said: "I think it will go up to 40 knots and that will be a sensational feeling. I get more satisfaction out of boating than motor racing."

"In Formula One there are a lot of highs and lows, but with boats the feeling is always



Pole position: Nigel Mansell in front of the Manhattan 74 yacht at the London International Boat Show yesterday. He wants to sail around the world



The interior of the yacht, which sleeps eight comfortably

## Times issues challenge to circle globe

By EDWARD GORMAN, SAILING CORRESPONDENT

THE call went out on the opening day of the London International Boat Show for the towns and cities of Britain to take up the challenge of racing each other around the world in *The Times* Clipper 2000 race.

The race, for paying amateur sailors, is identical to the 1991-92 race, in which 12 yachts named after sponsoring towns and cities, set off in October 2000. It is organised by the yachtman Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, and sponsored by *The Times*.

After leaving the South Coast, contestants will sail round the middle latitudes of the world by way of more than 12 ports, including stops at Hawaii, Japan, China, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Africa and the United States.

The unique feature of the race, in which crews will compete for *The Times* Trophy over six legs, is the chance it offers for towns and cities to compete against each other. Speaking at the Boat Show yesterday, Sir Robin com-

pared the concept with league football: "An awful lot of people get behind their team and, if it does well, it is good for the town and good for the city. We thought why not take this concept a stage further and have cities competing around the world sailing a yacht for the millennium."

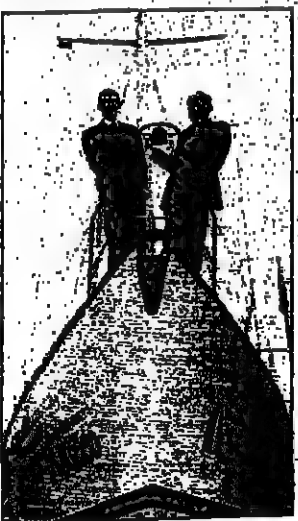
John Bryant, Deputy Editor of *The Times*, said: "An awful lot of people are looking around for something significant to do to mark the millennium and we know that many people harbour in their hearts this dream to sail around the world. The combination of the Clipper race and the millennium will be irresistible."

To sponsor and secure the name of a boat, cities or towns must pay a fee of £100,000. That sum could come from various sources, including private business or individuals, perhaps working in conjunction with the local chamber of commerce. The fee also buys a package of promotional opportunities for the sponsoring city, including one free berth for each of the six legs and corporate entertaining days before and during the race.

Sir Robin emphasised that sailing experience was not required, since thorough pre-race training would be offered as part of a package.

Up to 12 boats will compete in the 34,000-mile race, which will take ten months to circumnavigate the globe. Each boat will be led by a professional skipper and the organisers are hoping that a core crew of five will complete the whole race on each boat, with another 14 crew members participating in either one, two or three legs of the race.

For information on *The Times* Clipper 2000 race please telephone 01234 711550 or see the Clipper Ventures website at [www.clipper-ventures.com](http://www.clipper-ventures.com)



The Times clipper at the launch yesterday

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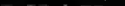
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# Couple and daughter killed in house fire

Lighted candle on a television set  
it thought to have caused blaze  
hours after a 21st birthday party

A COUPLE and their daughter died early yesterday when fire swept through the family home hours after a 21st birthday party.

Firefighters found the bodies of Brian Boyle, 50, his wife, Briege, 48, and their daughter Sasha, 23, when they broke into the house in the village of Rostreath, Co Down. A second daughter, Marie, a model, whose 21st birthday party had ended just hours earlier, escaped through a skylight and was rescued by neighbours, who raised the alarm.

Firefighters carried another woman aged 41, out of the burning house. She was taken to hospital with smoke inhalation. The firemen also needed hospital treatment.

It was not known what started the fire, which broke out in the living room of the semi-detached bungalow at Rosswood Park, on the outskirts of the village. However, police are believed to be investigating the possibility that it may have been caused by a lighted candle in a television set.

The fire is believed to have started about two hours after the last of the guests, including Marie's grandparents, had left

the house. It quickly spread towards the front door, trapping her parents in an upstairs bedroom and others on the ground floor.

Firemen from neighbouring Warrenpoint used breathing apparatus as they twice battled through the flames to reach the victims. The living room was well alight by the time they arrived. Marie had to be restrained from going back into the house.

The 41-year-old woman rescued from the house was taken to Daisy Hill Hospital, in Newry, where she was being treated in the high dependency unit. A spokesman said she was in a serious but stable condition.

Clara Fearon, who lives opposite the Boyles' house, said: "I was woken by the Boyles' next-door neighbours, who had spotted smoke coming out of the living room. My wife phoned the fire brigade."

"Myself and some of the other neighbours then went round the back of the house, banging on the doors and windows to try and rouse them. Marie made it out of the skylight window and we managed to coax her off the roof by



Marie Boyle escaped through a skylight

pulling a wheelie bin over for her to climb down on to.

"Marie told us her mum and dad were still in the other upstairs bedroom, but we didn't know her sister or anybody else was in the house at the time. I managed to scramble on to the roof and shouted through the skylight window, but the heat and smoke were intense and I had to come down," Mr Fearon said.

Another neighbour, Kieran Killen, said: "We got a couple of garden hoses and trained

them at the windows, but then the whole place just seemed to combust and go up in flames."

John Smyth, a fire station officer, said that the fire was one of the most horrific incidents he had seen. "The ground floor was an inferno. My officers were just going into a wall of flame."

Firefighters, who received the emergency call at 4.20am, carried four people out of the house within minutes, and searched the building twice, he said. However, three of the four were already dead.

"It was obvious there had been a party - the cake was still in the kitchen," Mr Smyth said. "It was a heartbreaking scene. It's the first tragedy of this type in the area for some time and for several of my officers it was the first time they had had to deal with fatalities."

Mr Boyle was said to have been a popular member of Warrenpoint golf club, where the flag flew at half-mast yesterday in mark of the tragedy, which has deeply shocked the tight-knit community.

Tony Williamson, an independent councillor and family friend, said that Mrs Boyle suffered a double bereavement just before Christmas, when her two brothers died within a short time of each other. "They were a lovely family, very well known in the area," Mr Williamson said.



Brian and Briege Boyle, who died in the fire with their daughter Sasha

## Teacher who hit love rival goes free

By JOANNA BAILE

A TEACHER who attacked his wife's lover with a metal pipe walked free from court yesterday after he was found guilty of wounding.

Alistair McColl, 37, a craft and design teacher, broke down at Norwich Crown Court when he was told that he would not be jailed.

Judge David Mellor imposed a 12-month conditional discharge on McColl, saying harsher punishment would serve no useful purpose.

The court was told how McColl was devastated when he learnt in May that his wife Cherie, 38, and Colin Breeze, who both teach at Westbourne High School, in Ipswich, were having an affair.

Two weeks after hearing that his wife was probably going to leave and take their two young children, McColl, from Ipswich, drove Mr Breeze to isolated woodland and hit him twice over the head with a length of steel tubing. Mr Breeze needed stitches.

McColl, who is suspended from Copleston High School, Ipswich, denied intending to cause him serious harm. He was cleared of the more serious charge of wounding with intent to cause grievous bodily harm. Earlier he had been cleared of attempted murder after the judge ruled that there was insufficient evidence.

## 'Don't drink and die' ads cut accidents

STEWART TENDLER, CRIME CORRESPONDENT

THE million Christmas campaigns against drink-driving cut a number of motorists testing positive by 22 per cent and reduced accidents by 5 per cent, police said yesterday.

Figure for the 43 forces in England and Wales show that the fall in place despite a rise in the number of motorists testing positive. The police believe the "Don't Drink and Die" campaign hit home with the target group of male drivers in their early 20s.

Yesterday the Association of Chief Police Officers issued figures for December 18 to January 2 showing that there were 16,795 breathalysers tests after collisions, compared with 15,455 last year. The number of other accidents fell from 6,881 to 6,444.

Drivers were positive in 1,081 cases 6 per cent of tests. In 1997-98 there were 1,430 positive tests representing 9 per cent of samples taken.

The success of the Christmas campaign means that the peak for drink-driving and accidents is now mid-year. Yesterday police and government officials said that a new campaign, maybe targeted at the summer holiday period. Chief constables also remain convinced of a need for a cut in the drink-driving limit.

The figures do not include the total number of tests carried out over the Christmas period. Forces adopted different policies, with some chief constables ordering widespread testing while others limited the tests to the scenes of accidents or cases where police suspected an offence.

Announcing the figures Ken Williams, Chief Constable of Norfolk and a senior spokesman for the association, said he thought the campaign had been more powerful than other years. It had helped to reach a hardcore of young drivers in their early 20s. But the police were still concerned at motorists in their 30s who continue to believe they can drink and drive safely. The number of deaths on the road because of drink has stayed at about 540 since 1992 and Mr Williams said more needed to be done to cut this.

He said police wanted to reduce the legal blood alcohol limit from 80mg alcohol in 100ml of blood to 50mg and they awaited a decision from the Government. Mr Williams said seven European countries had moved to 50mg and Spain was about to join them. He said British police did not support a zero level as this was difficult to test because the body could produce small amounts of alcohol naturally.

Leading article, page 23

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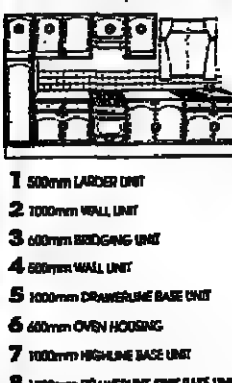
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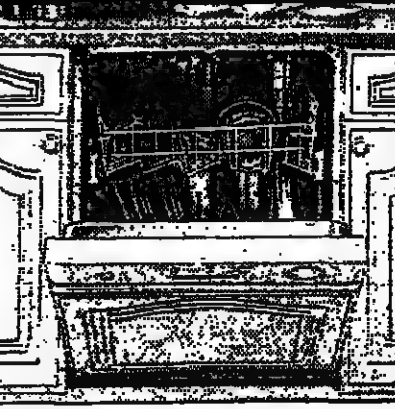
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# Cape Muslims threaten Blair visit

Protesters enraged by Iraq airstrikes vow disruption while leaders strengthen ties, Sam Kiley writes

HUNDREDS of South African Muslims burnt the Union Jack outside the British High Commission in Cape Town yesterday and pledged to disrupt Tony Blair's visit to the "Mother City" after being dispersed with stun grenades and teargas.

Protesting at the American and British airstrikes against Iraq, the demonstrators waved banners and screamed "One Blair, one buller" — an adaptation of the apartheid-era protest slogan "One settler, one buller".

Other placards read "United States, United Kingdom, United Terrorism" and "Blair — Blood on his hands". Armoured trucks were beaten with sticks as police fired teargas and stun grenades to force the crowd away from the High Commission, which stands opposite the South African parliament where Mr Blair is due to speak today.

The group behind the demonstration, Muslims Against Global Oppression, allegedly took responsibility for the bombing of the Planet Hollywood restaurant in Cape Town shortly after the US air raids on Afghanistan and Sudan last year. Two people were killed and five British holidaymakers from the same family were injured in the blast.

The police said yesterday that forensic science experts had found similarities between the Planet Hollywood device and a recent car bomb which injured two people on the Cape Town Waterfront marina on New Year's Day. Members of Mr Blair's entourage will be staying there during the Prime Minister's short visit to the Cape.

"We are not taking any chances at all," a police spokesman said. "There could not be any greater security for Mr Blair's visit."

But yesterday the demonstrators were able to force their way into central Cape Town after being denied permission to march, and burn the Union Jack along with the flags of Israel and the US.

In Johannesburg, meanwhile, Mr Blair gave Thabo Mbeki, his apparent-to-President Mandela, a ringing endorsement ahead of elections this year. The Prime Minister backed his belief that South Africa was on the right course with a 40 per cent boost in British aid and a pledge to support South Africa in Europe.

Mr Blair's praise for Mr Mbeki, the Deputy President, and the policies of the ANC

Government, were also aimed at reassuring whites that Mr Mandela's retirement this year will not result in a black backlash and the end of the policy of reconciliation.

"Because of [Mr Mbeki] and his leadership qualities I have great confidence for the future here," Mr Blair said. Their often jocular joint press conference signalled the beginning of a special relationship amid pledges to co-operate closely on solutions to African conflicts as well as Iraq.

In recent speeches, Mr Mbeki has emphasised the vast gap in the average incomes of black and white South Africans, and given a warning of a growing "rage" among blacks that this has not been closed five years after the end of white rule.

Mr Blair announced an extra £90 million in aid to help bridge the gaps between basic services to the races. "The new Government has made huge strides since 1994. But transformation is far from complete. Britain is committed to strengthening its support for South Africa's efforts to overcome the legacy of apartheid," he said. "We have done this because we believe it is a good investment for the future."

The Prime Minister added that he thought the Government was "taking the right measures" to combat the problem of spiralling crime. Few South Africans would agree. As Mr Blair spoke, and hours before he was due to visit a women's support group in the impoverished black township of Alexandra, news of a double rape and murder was being broadcast.

Later in Alexandra, on the outskirts of Johannesburg, Mr Blair announced £2 million in financial support for programmes aimed at preventing violence against women. South Africa experiences high levels of physical and sexual abuse of women, and has the world's highest rate of reported rape.

The two leaders also discussed talks between the European Union and South Africa on a free-trade agreement. But Mr Blair was not able to persuade Mr Mbeki to sign a deal worth billions of pounds to South Africa. Agreement has been held-up over Pretoria's insistence that domestically produced sherry and port should be marketed in Europe as such. European commissioners have insisted that these products must be marketed as "fortified wines" in line with EU laws.

## British miner dies in Angola ambush

By SAM KILEY

A BRITISH miner and three others have been killed in an ambush in Angola's diamond-rich Lunda Norte province amid speculation that the rebel Unita movement is holding up to 18 Western hostages after other attacks on mines and the shooting down of United Nations aircraft.

The Briton, Patrick Bergin, a Brazilian colleague and two Angolan guards were killed when their vehicle was ambushed about four miles from their base at Luzamba in what was believed by their employer, Ashton Mining of Australia, to be a Unita attack. Banditry is commonplace, however, in an area rich in diamonds.

The attack is the second on a mine in which Britons have been killed or abducted, allegedly by Dr Jonas Savimbi's Unita. Last month a British manager and several workers

were killed, and four men including Jason Pope, 26, a British engineer, were taken hostage, in a Unita attack on a mine owned by Diamond Works. The company had had close links to a South African company that once supplied troops for Angolan government forces fighting Unita.

Nothing has been heard of the hostages since Mr Pope contacted his employers by two-way radio. They said he was being "used as a pack animal" by the fighters to carry goods looted from the mine. According to sources in Luanda, the Angolan capital, there is evidence that some or all of the 14 passengers on the first UN aircraft shot down just before the new year may have been captured by Unita, which used Western hostages to attract publicity for its movement during the 1980s.



Tony Blair meets street children yesterday in the impoverished township of Alexandra, north of Johannesburg. He visits Cape Town today

## Limited truce in Sierra Leone

By MICHAEL BINYON  
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

SIERRA Leone's President Kabbah and the jailed rebel leader Foday Sankoh were reported to have agreed a week-long ceasefire yesterday after a day of fighting in the country's capital, Freetown. The President said the truce would allow for talks.

Earlier, fighting raged across the capital as West African troops launched a counter-attack to stem the day-old rebel advance.

Residents covered in buildings as shooting continued between the Nigerian-led Ecomog intervention force and the Revolutionary United Front, the rebel group that has joined forces with the ousted junta and defectors from the Sierra Leone Army.

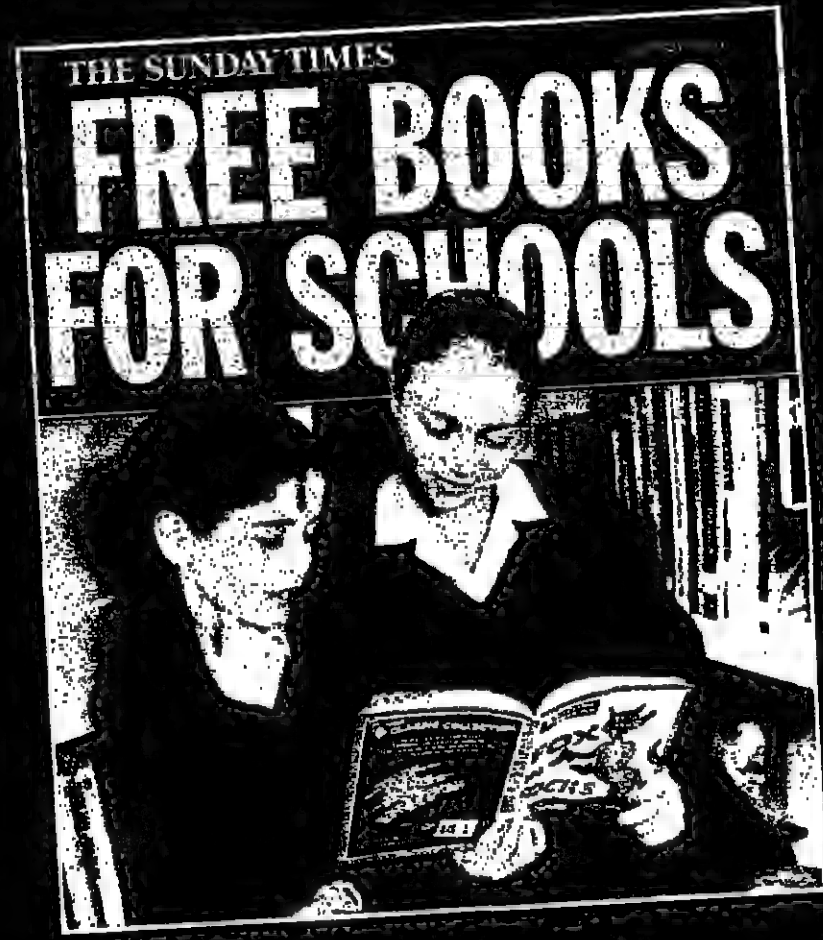
Britain yesterday accused Liberia of helping the rebels and called on President Taylor to stop direct aid. Sam Bockarie, the rebel leader, said his forces would stop fighting if Sankoh was freed. President Kabbah said that could happen within a week.

## THE SUNDAY TIMES



### STYLE

Kate Moss is back: exclusive preview of her new work for Calvin Klein.



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### CULTURE

The female Pavarotti: why Cecilia Bartoli is right to play the spoilt diva.



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# Iraq inspectors were US spies

AMERICAN officials, reacting to leaks from senior United Nations officials, confirmed Iraq's long-standing suspicions that UN spies worked under cover as UN weapons inspectors to gather intelligence about the Iraqi regime.

Despite official denials, American sources were quoted as saying that US intelligence officers had served on UN inspection teams using diplomatic cover or other professional identities to collect information for the United States.

The UN teams are said to have installed a "black box" eavesdropping system in Iraq last year that intercepted President Saddam Hussein's presidential communications network and fed the information via US satellite to the National Security Agency.

Analysts sifted through tens of thousands of hours of intercepted conversations before relaying relevant information to the UN Special Commission (Unscm) for use by the inspectors.

The operation, known as "Shake the Tree", was designed to penetrate the "concealment mechanism" by which Iraq's intelligence agencies and elite military units

## UN leak confirms

### Saddam's claims,

writes James Bone

in New York

hid proscribed weapons components and documents from UN inspectors. But the same security network, run by a presidential secretary who is an elder in Saddam's Tikriti clan, was also responsible for the Iraqi leader's personal security and the operation gave American insight into his movements.

US officials said that some of the intelligence was used in last month's four-day bombing campaign, which targeted the inner circle responsible for concealing Iraq's mass-destruction weapons.

Iraqi officials about the disclosures, which originally were leaked to the press by aides to Kofi Annan, the UN Secretary-General, who feared that the United States was abusing Unscm. "We have here under the hat of the United Nations, spies and CIA people," Hu-

mam Abdul-Khaleq, Iraq's Minister of Culture and Information, said. Khalid al-Saeedi, chairman of the human rights committee of the Iraqi parliament, said the disclosures should bolster Iraq's credibility.

Senior American officials were said to be furious with Mr Annan for allowing his aides to make public a US intelligence operation that apparently is still under way. But there has been a widening divergence between Washington and the UN since the Clinton Administration announced a policy of overthrowing Saddam, a move that put it at odds with the Security Council's stated goals in Iraq.

Diplomats predicted that the confirmation of an American spying operation would only undermine Unscm and Richard Butler, its Australian head, who is under increasing pressure to resign.

Iraq defied the Western-imposed no-fly zones over northern and southern Iraq again yesterday. A US F16 fighter fired on an air-defence installation in the northern zone after the pilot found that he was about to be targeted by a surface-to-air missile.



Rebels keeping vigil yesterday as President Pastrana of Colombia waited to start talks with the leader of the country's largest left-wing guerrilla group on measures to end the 40-year civil war. Hundreds of international observers, human rights activists and Colombian politicians con-

## Colombia rebels join talks

verged on San Vicente del Caguan, a remote jungle town, hoping to witness an unprecedented handshake between the recently elected Conservative Party President and Manuel Marulanda

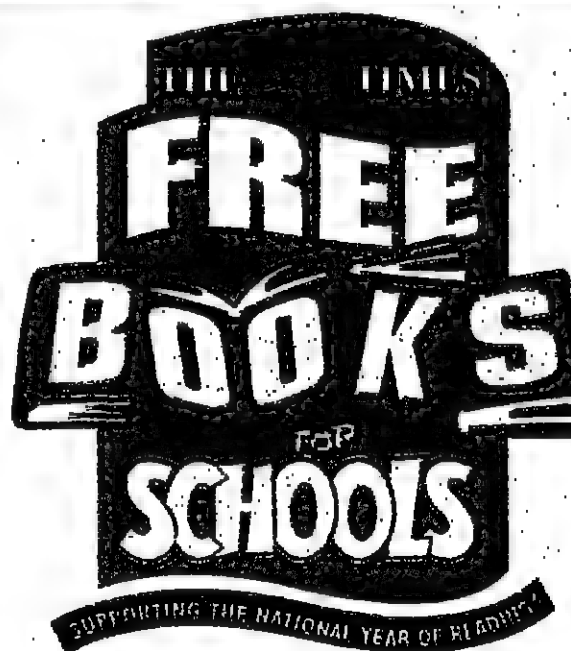
(Gabriella Gamini writes). But the legendary leader of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (Farc) failed to emerge from his mountain hideout. The veteran guerrilla leader, who

commands 15,000 armed rebels who control most of rural Colombia, has not appeared in public for 40 years. A middle-ranking rebel commander, Joaquin Gomez, spoke in his place. It was not clear last night whether the talks will succeed in moving on from the initial contact.

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THE TIMES

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SEE THE BACK PAGE OF SECTION ONE FOR TODAY'S TOKEN  
CHANGING TIMES

## WORLD IN BRIEF

### Patriarch exhorts Serbs to multiply

Belgrade: Patriarch Pavle, Serbia's Orthodox leader, has reminded the nation that the struggle for Kosovo, where Albanians outnumber Serbs by nine to one, will be decided as much by demographics as by bullets (Tom Walker writes). In his sermon to the nation on Wednesday night, the Orthodox Christmas Eve, he said: "Who has the most sheep in the field, that is his field." If the message had been too oblique for some, he then added: "Multiply yourselves."

The frail 85-year-old is no stranger to controversy. Two years ago he spent his Christmas standing between riot police and students demonstrating against the regime of President Milosevic. By raising the issue of Serbia's declining birth rate, he again runs the risk of falling foul of a government determined to bury the issue of the dwindling number of Serbs in the country's southern province.

### Polar venture called off

Sydney: Atrocious weather conditions have forced three adventurers to abandon their quest to retrace the footsteps of the explorer, Robert Scott, 37 years after his fatal expedition to the South Pole and back, organisers said. The team, led by Peter Hillary, son of Sir Edmund Hillary, the Everest conqueror, had been tent-bound since Sunday in temperatures of -30C (-22F) and winds gusting at 50 to 60 knots. Snowdrifts of more than 6ft and visibility of just 16ft have put the team three weeks behind schedule. They will continue to the South Pole, but will then be airlifted back to Scott Base. (AFP)

### New Cabinet in Turkey

Istanbul: Turkey is expected to emerge from six weeks of political stalemate as Bulent Ecevit, right, submits a Cabinet for approval today (Andrew Finkel writes). The Government, the sixth in the lifetime of the present parliament, seems likely to win a confidence vote next week, but is unlikely to accomplish more than to lead the country into a general and local elections planned for April 18. Mr Ecevit's Democratic Left party will lead a minority administration.



### Israel seminaries 'fake'

Jerusalem: Police are investigating claims that the Religious Affairs Ministry has funnelled millions of pounds to fictitious seminaries. "We received information from the Finance Ministry and the police that led us to suspect that some of the religious seminaries we have been giving money to did not exist," said Shimon Malka, a spokesman. He said the seminaries' accountants were summoned "and we became suspicious when some failed to appear". The ministry's director-general, Avi Blaustein, told Haaretz that £10 million a year was being siphoned off. (AFP)

### Wife shortage in China

Shanghai: The gender imbalance in China's population is worsening, according to a government think-tank, which says the male-female ratio is 120-100. According to Business Weekly, figures from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing indicate that one in six males - 111 million - cannot hope to find a wife. A longstanding bias in favour of male offspring has taken a harsh toll, combined with the country's one-child policy. Overseas women's groups say there has been a massive upsurge in female infanticide. China's population is over 1.22 billion. (AFP)

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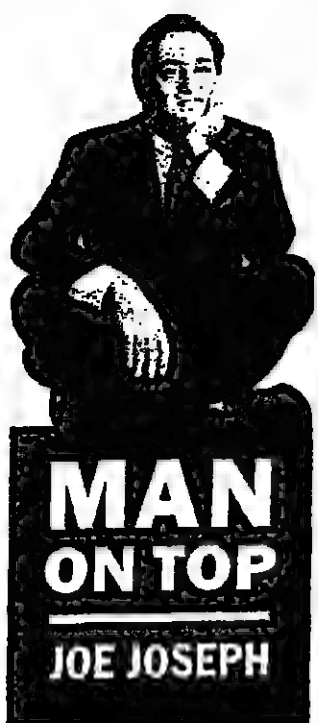
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JOE JOSEPH

## Buy now, blush for another 12 months

If you're one of those people who don't visit the January sales, you should, because then you'll be able to witness at first hand the dramatic discounts that make it affordable for many of your colleagues to dress in a way that makes them look as soigné as Elvis just before he popped his final double-cheeseburger.

The people who shop in Versace and Gucci all year round aren't worried about price tags. If they had thought that lemon and magenta pashmina hotpants were cool, they'd have bought some. The reason they are in the sale at £18.40 below their original price is that nobody wanted them except Elton John, who uses them as novelty lens cloths for his spectacles.

When bargain hunters realise they've made this kind of mistake, they hide behind the excuse that, well, of course they're aware that

they look ridiculous, but these happen to be lucky hotpants. (You: "You look ridiculous in those pashmina hotpants." Michael: "I know, but they always bring me luck, and I'm going for an interview this afternoon at the Treasury for Charlie Whelan's old job as Gordon Brown's press secretary.")

What these people haven't yet grasped is that sales are a sting operation, just like in that film with Robert Redford and Paul Newman. They aim to suck in the unwary punter. As Marx said — check before using this in your A-level economics exam — capitalism survives by adapting. Given the scale of overproduction today, capitalism makes ends meet by off-loading all its surplus products over a fortnight in January at their true market value to be able to pull this trick off, it pretends to sell these same goods at three times

their true worth for the remaining 50 weeks of the year.

To help the sting along, stores actually pump a chemical into their air-conditioning system at sale time which induces you to buy, in bulk, items that you'd never dream of buying at all during the rest of the year. "Look, there's that Xylotex Protein shampoo, the shampoo that repairs your hair because it cares," but also makes it smell like a Boy Scout's sleeping bag. Hang on, they're giving away 50 per cent extra free. Now that's a bargain."

So now you're lugging home a carrier containing 50 per cent more of a hair product you never even use. At other times you're tricked into buying things you do use all year, such as shoes — only if it weren't for the sale discounts, you'd make do with the shoes you already own. But then you make the mistake of wearing your new shoes

straight away, and because it's January and it's raining, they acquire that mysterious white tide-mark above the welt that is impossible to remove, except maybe with NASA-developed technology.

The easiest remedy is to throw away the shoes and buy a fresh pair in the next sale. This is the retail equivalent of perpetual motion, a cycle which was activated by the flawed decision to make shoes out of leather in the first place. Cows are covered in leather, except for one bit: their feet. If even cows think that leather doesn't stand up as footwear material, maybe we should all listen.

The downside of funneling so much fill-ringing into a fortnight is that stores quickly fill with shoppers who haven't got out much for the past 50 weeks. These are people who are determined to exploit

this rare opportunity to converse with sales assistants by imparting their life story ("The computer's for my son, Jack. He's 12 now. He's got a computer already, but he was using his cousin's Apple last weekend — an iMac was it? — and he noticed that..."). It's like overhearing that intimate conversation people have after they've just gone to bed with someone for the first time and feel they must confide every detail of their life to their new partner before dawn breaks. This shopper is invariably one place ahead of you in the queue at John Lewis.

But Adam Smith would recognise this sale-time frenzy, along with the emergence from retail hibernation of those life-story-tellers, as merely further proof of the market's invisible hand at work — because their effect is to make millions of us willing to pay three times what something is truly

worth, purely for the privilege of being able to buy it during the 50 non-sale weeks a year when there are fewer other shoppers around.

It is precisely to avoid the January crush that I'm waiting until next month to return a shirt I got for Christmas. It shrank after I cleaned it in the bargain washing machine I bought in last January's sales, a machine manufactured in a country where underpaid workers like to wreak revenge on rich Westerners by mislabelling the dial on the wash programme, with the result that switching on a wash triggers as random an outcome as pulling the arm of a fruit machine.

In the meantime, I'll just have to wear the shirt as it is, and, if people slobber at the snug fit, I'll just explain about my washing machine. "I'd get rid of the damn thing," I'll tell them, "only it happens to be a lucky washing machine."

## Square-bashing the gays

Calum McLean says he was 'treated like a dog' and suffered verbal rape in the Navy because he was gay. Now he and other victims are challenging the Armed Forces. Vanora Bennett investigates

Perhaps you believed that the Thought Police existed only in the dark, imaginary Britain of 1984. But Calum McLean, arrested and interrogated in this country in 1994 on suspicion of thinking subversive homosexual thoughts, sees things differently.

McLean was serving as a medical assistant in the Royal Navy, which bans homosexuality. He was 20, and just beginning to ask himself the questions about his orientation that hadn't occurred to him when he joined up at 17. Snooping through his room, his flatmates found a pile of gay magazines and reported him to the authorities. The questioning that followed his detainment started a chain of events that led to a second arrest, discharge from the forces, a period of mental illness and a suicide attempt.

"They were like a terrier, refusing to give up," he says. "But there was no reason. There was nothing wrong with my work. I didn't commit any offence on base, never had sex on base. At that point my being gay was only a state of mind."

Now McLean is one of more than 60 sacked homosexual ex-Service staff who, organised by activist groups, will be taking the Ministry of Defence on in court. They want compensation. But mostly, they say, they want justice.

"I feel I should be compensated. They treated me like a dog. I want something back in order to start building my life up again," says McLean. "Since my discharge I've just floated around for four years. This will put a lot of devils to rest."

The gay activists' ultimate aim is to overturn the forces' ban on employing people of "homosexual orientation", those who think gay thoughts even if, in daily life, they consciously avoid all sexual contact so as to keep jobs they love.

Activists say dropping the ban would bring our war machine up to date. Many Nato

countries' forces, they note, put restrictions on homosexual and heterosexual activity on base, but deem troops' sexual thoughts and off-base life private. Gay rights groups see the British regulation as old-fashioned and irrelevant in a liberal country whose government includes openly gay officials.

"We have women in the front line now, so relationships are inevitable. With women there are clear rules on sexual behaviour and how relationships should be conducted: discreet, off base, off duty," says Duncan Lustig-Preen, the spokesman for the gays-from-the-military group Rank Outsiders. "If it's like that, it's not an issue I'd need to act on as a commander."

"But if a couple are sneaking off to have sex in an office or whatever, the rules are clear. You move one partner on. If people misbehave, they should be disciplined. We don't think there should be some weird sexual libertarianism in the Army. And I would fully support quite stern action if there was any homosexual activity of that kind."

Lifting the ban altogether is a long-term goal, but the activists' first target is to win acceptance of their claim that the lengthy and humiliating interrogations to which suspected homosexuals are subjected are sexual harassment. So, they say, were the arrests of several of the group when homosexuality in the services was still considered a crime. (Being of homosexual orientation, while decriminalised in 1967, is still grounds for administrative discharge.)

"I had a hellish interrogation," McLean recalls. "It was like verbal rape."

Lustig-Preen says the way gays and lesbians are interviewed — bombarded with hostile demands for details of their sexual preferences — is cruel. Suicidal thoughts are common among those discharged.

"The ministry has always argued that it's very easy to leave the forces by simply saying that you're gay. To establish that you're not pulling a fast one, they say they need to ask these questions. But it doesn't

wash," he says. "If they've already got the information about your being gay, you can be discharged. They don't need to ask such things as whether you are the active or passive partner. The way this policy is enacted is unjust and cruel."

Lustig-Preen says the Services lose between 100 and 200 people a year because of their homosexuality. Although he estimates that it costs taxpayers £50 million a year to enforce the ban — including the expenses of surveillance, administration and wasted training — MoD officials say losses are tiny. The total services intake is 25,000 recruits a year.

As far as the MoD is concerned, the ban makes sense for practical reasons and is not a moral judgment.

"To have people with homosexual orientation serving would undermine combat effectiveness," says an MoD spokesman, Tim Watkinson. "With imposed communal living in single-sex accommodation, under stress and under fire, it could cause tensions, cause relationships to become polarised and undermine efficiency."

After all, officials say, the ban is not a secret. Recruits are told about it at the start and cannot claim to be surprised if it is later applied to them.

But most recruits are taken on as teenagers. Like Calum McLean, they may become aware only gradually that they are gay. And if they do start worrying about it once they are serving, they will find few people to confide in inside the military world.

Nowadays, says Watkinson, people in the Services are encouraged to discuss any possible homosexual feelings with a commanding officer, military doctor, chaplain or welfare officer. "It's dealt with as discreetly and sensitively as possible, a chat with the commanding officer, no police or anything like that," he says. But because these officials are in the military chain of command, they are duty-bound to report any subordinate's possible homosexual inclination. This leads to removal from work — not an option likely to



Calum McLean, discharged from the Royal Navy for being gay: "There was nothing wrong with my work and I didn't commit any offence on base"

encourage a soldier or sailor who is unsure of his feelings.

In a tacit admission that something more is needed, confidential telephone helplines became available in 1996. But the principle of guidance from inside the Armed Forces remains, as Watkinson says, that "we would advise people to think carefully through their sexuality. If they turned out to be homosexual, they'd be asked to go."

Activists' earlier attempts to challenge employers' rights to dismiss staff for their sexual orientation have failed in British courts. This time around, at an industrial tribunal in Croydon, South London, they will be forced to shift their ground.

At the tribunal, Rank Outsiders and the gay lobby group Stonewall are claiming sexual harassment — a lesser complaint about the manner

in which their clients were dismissed, rather than a look at the principle for which they were dismissed. All they can achieve from this case is compensation, although they hope that victory would then lead to more attempts to lift the ban altogether when it next comes up for review, in 2001.

In a sign that the tide may be turning in their favour, the tribunal has ordered the MoD to hand over tapes of interviews with five dozen former servicemen and women thrown out because of their sexuality. "We are pleased the MoD has been forced to back down," Stonewall's executive director, Angela Mason, said after the December hearing.

Jean Gould, of the Birmingham solicitors Tyndens, which is handling many of the cases, says cautiously: "There's an expectation that

the political climate is such that there will be change."

Britain's Armed Forces have always prided themselves on living by tougher rules than the rest of society. But tolerance may be more widespread in the ranks than senior officers think, says McLean. After news of his second arrest and

24-hour bout of interrogation were leaked around his base at Prestwick, in Scotland, McLean says he was "terrified" to go back to the corridor of "chefs, known in the Royal Navy for hard drinking and hard fighting" where he lived. "But they couldn't have been more supportive. They knew I

did my job properly and was a professional. 'It's unbelievable,' they all said, 'it's unfair'. If it wasn't for the lads, it would have been much worse to be discharged. For me, that blows out of the water the MoD's argument about the boys on the ground not liking to have homosexuals about."



### A. S. Byatt on growing up with books

When I was young the life I read about in books was far more exciting than real life. I didn't like books about children, I didn't like books pandering to me. I don't like multicultural books about housing estates and milk cartons which try and impose an adult mindset onto children. Children want strange adventures. If you want pirates you should have pirates and if you want dinosaurs and genies and dragons then you should have them.

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\_\_\_\_\_

**I**n Russell & Bromley I spurned a pair of gold-kid flip-flops. \$49 (\$79.99), and a black sat in mule with a silver kitten heel. E91 (E115). But in Penwick, slightly unimbed by my prodigies of self-denial, I must countably purchase a black Sun & S. T-shirt with a pair of glittery silver barbed wire across the front. E5 (\$29.99). I can't think what got into me. Need thing? I know I'll be calling Cher and asking for her dressmaker's number.

It was an heroic effort, all that non-shopping. I can tell you. But it's not over yet. The Manolo Blahnik sale begins today. And if I go as I dare say I shall, having attended every sale in the past decade: I know what will happen. A mysterious force, like the one that spirals the ruby slippers on to Dorothy's feet in *The Wizard of Oz*, will divest me of my stout walking boots and replace them with a spindly pair of gold kid mules. And a bin later I shall walk helplessly as my hand writes out, all by itself, the cheque that would have kept me in plain white cotton sheets until 2100.

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## Mary Ann Sieghart on the subtle snobbery of baptism

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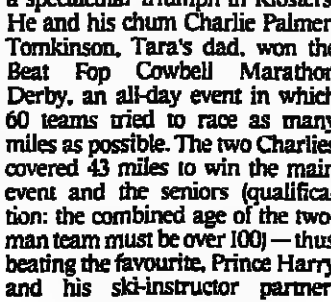
maryann.sieghart@the-times.co.uk



**What does the millennium mean?**  
**The Chief Rabbi, Dr Jonathan Sacks,**  
**on what we should be celebrating**

*Simon Jenkins returns next week*

● **CHARLIE WHELAN** is an honorable man, so I believe his claim that he did not leak the story of Peter Mandelson's "loan" to his friend Paul Routledge. But I fear he may have given ammunition to less trusting sorts by enjoying lunch on Wednesday with the washed-up Routledge, author of the forthcoming hatchet job "Mandy". He was seen with his fellow



THE Prince of Wales has pulled off a spectacular triumph in Klosters. He and his chum Charlie Palmer, Tomkinson, Tara's dad, won the Beat Pop Cowbell Marathon Derby, an all-day event in which 60 teams tried to race as many miles as possible. The two Charlies covered 43 miles to win the main event and the seniors (qualification: the combined age of the two team men must be over 100) — thus beating the favourite, Prince Harry and his ski-instructor partner

**TRUANCY** on the slopes. As David Blunkett, the Education Secretary, urges parents not to take sprogs out of school in term-time (unless they are PM or Home Secretary), MPs and peers are swishing down the ski runs of Davos with their families. The parliamentary ski team, chaired by Denis MacShane and headed by those other notables Tom King and Lord Astor of Hever, trots off to the town every year to lose against the Swiss. The hundred-strong group will not pack its goggles away until this weekend — a week after the start of the school term.

"I deeply resent the way you exploit children in this way," says

● **CAROL THATCHER** has handed a worker painting the wall outside the Tate. "He was painting it a billious purple. It was appalling. So I went up and asked

**JASPER GERARD**

to take a picnic to the box.  
Peasant living: brings out  
neighbourhood from those  
who have Agas or spare blank  
cows. Surviving hardships gives  
one a warm metaphoric  
glow, but shaving or bathing  
in cold water does not. It is  
a small triumph to remember  
how to hand milk the  
neighbouring cows, cut off  
their milking machines.  
But one had forgotten, of  
course, what hard work it is on  
the fingers and how early in the  
morning milking starts.

So do not believe the sentimental  
nostalgics. Electrics  
and hot water are goods.  
Medieval feasts were jolly only  
if you had a hall like Penstuart  
or Knote, and an army of  
scullions to burn their fingers.  
The millennium bug can do  
what it likes to computers. But  
if it switches off the electricity,  
I am taking to my bed until it  
switches it on again. Bed is the  
best place to be for the millennium  
anyway.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS





## WHAT MONTY SAW

A racist verdict that Africa has done its best to prove right

The African is "a complete savage", whose only hope is a British colonial "master plan" to carve out giant West, Central and East African federations and unlock their vast wealth. That blunty contemptuous and, to modern eyes, blatantly racist, verdict on the capacity of Africans for self-government, delivered 50 years ago by a British Chief of the Imperial General Staff, long dead, but only now made public, should in the normal course of history have no more than curiosity value in 1999.

In 1948, with the exception of Ethiopia, whose "state of medieval feudalism" so appalled Viscount Montgomery of Alamein, the flags of Britain, France, Belgium and Portugal still flew over black Africa. It was not until 1957, nine years after Monty's report on his tour of a dozen African territories, that Nkrumah's Ghana led the march to independence. But the map changed rapidly thereafter. Tony Blair may be courting, in South Africa, a country that achieved majority rule only recently, but it is nearly 40 years since atlases painted most of Africa in colonial hues.

Yet so badly have Africans in fact ruled themselves that, were Monty alive today, he might be claiming that he saw the future more clearly than the decolonisers who were to pull Britain out of Africa as precipitately as it had scrambled in the 1890s to get in. The roll-call of villains includes some of this century's most murderous: Amin, Bokassa, Mengistu and Abacha are only the most familiar. The rogue's gallery of incompetent, corrupt dictators is longer still: take your pick of past heads of state from Kenya, Hastings Banda or Sekou Touré, not to mention Nkrumah himself, and innumerable generals and jumped-up corporals. Tanzania and Zambia may have suffered from fools more than rogues, but the legacy of the lunatic, paternalistic socialism of Nyerere and Kaunda will take decades to reverse.

In parts of Africa, notably Uganda, Ghana and bits of the Horn, no-nonsense though still autocratic reformers are restoring hope, but in Kenya and Zimbabwe, Presidents Moi and Mugabe perpetuate a miserable tradition. Even in South Africa, for all the respect due to President

Mandela, crime and corruption are rising, as is unemployment. It is not surprising that Africa tops the league for coups, unrepayable debt and civil collapse — and comes bottom, after receiving more aid per head than any other region, by every measure of prosperity or quality of life.

In Africa's apocalypse, the warrior is only one of the horsemen. But its anarchic wars seem unstoppable. This week, for the second time in a year, Sierra Leone's terrified civilians cowered in their houses while murderous rebels battled for control of the capital against ineffectual government troops and Nigerian "peacekeepers". The rape of Congo, which finally rid itself last year of President Mobutu, prince of kleptocrats in a continent blatantly pillaged by its "fathers of independence", continues. This time half a dozen African governments are militarily involved, motivated more by greed for diamond loot than by solidarity with Mobutu's venally inept successor, Laurent Kabila. The shooting down of yet another United Nations plane, wrecked Angola, after a huge international investment in restoring peace, back towards war's abyss.

So was Monty right, or have Africans been just singularly unlucky in their rulers? In the judiciary and the churches, parts of the hounded press and many a village are enough examples of courageous opposition to misrule to challenge his sweeping verdict. And, however appalling Africa's civil rights record, Monty's grand design had no room for democracy either.

He demanded, rather than proposed, a permanent, intensive British engagement in Africa, dictated not by altruism but by ambitions to rebuild Britain's, not Africa's, prosperity. The then colonial secretary rejected his plans not on moral grounds but because he thought Africa too poor to be worth a "great expense of money and effort". Had Monty won, Britain would have imposed an indefensible, and unsustainable, version of apartheid. Britain could have ruled Africa better and left it better. But the sobering fact remains that Africans today are poorer than they were when Monty sought to make of the socialist Atlee an improbable second Cecil Rhodes.

## BRING FORTH THE FORMS

How Mandelson can help his building society and himself

The Prince of Darkness, of all people, should know that devils lurk in details. The Government needs to put the events of the past fortnight, behind it, and to shift attention from the reasons for resignations to its new policy agenda. But there are still loose ends from Notting Hillgate that could be fashioned into a new nose for Peter Mandelson unless he takes action.

Although the former Secretary of State for Trade and Industry protested that he had done nothing wrong in borrowing money from a friend to purchase his Notting Hill home, and that none need have known the details of a private arrangement between two opposition backbenchers, a third party seems to have been deceived in this deal long before either Mr Mandelson or Geoffrey Robinson became ministers with interests to declare. The Britannia Building Society, from whom Mr Mandelson secured a mortgage, apparently knew nothing of his private deal. If he withheld information from them, Mr Mandelson has placed himself and the society's officers in a difficult position. He should now make rapid amends for his reticence so far by embracing candour.

After interviewing Mr Mandelson yesterday, the Britannia is considering what action to take. If the society felt that Mr Mandelson had been less than candid in declaring his outstanding liabilities, then it is open to it to press charges. If details of Mr Robinson's loan were not included on the mortgage application form, there would be a case for a fraud prosecution. It is up to the society to decide on an

appropriate course of action. But it has to operate in a delicate political framework.

The Britannia is one of those building societies which has retained its mutual character. It, and other mutuals, are looking to the Government of which Mr Mandelson was so recently a part to help protect them from individual members who wish to demutualise societies in search of a windfall. The minister responsible for these matters, Patricia Hewitt, has been less responsive to the mutual societies than they would wish and some suspect that the Government would be only too happy to see thousands secure windfalls in this potentially recessionary year. Given its wish to secure a more favourable hearing from Government about protecting its mutual status, the temptation exists for the Britannia to let Mr Mandelson off the hook, whatever he wrote on his form.

There are other good reasons why the society would not wish to prosecute. Mr Mandelson is likely to meet all his obligations, and he is clearly not a professional fraudster. It might be imagined that, all other things being equal, the matter could be dropped. But other things are not equal. There must be no suspicion that favouritism had been shown to Mr Mandelson for political reasons. The former minister can help the society out of its bind by placing all the documentation relevant to his loan and mortgage application in the public domain. Such a step would win applause and show that Mr Mandelson had absorbed the cautionary lessons of this affair. If he ever wants to be a prince again, he cannot afford darkness.

## KNOW YOUR LIMIT

Why drink-drive levels should be left unchanged

Although this Christmas has been as joyous as any other, drivers have tempered their celebrations with moderation. The number failing breath-tests over the holiday fell by more than a fifth compared with the previous year. Good news in itself, this strengthens the arguments against the Government's proposals to cut the legal alcohol limit from 80mg to 50mg per 100ml of blood, barely one pint of beer. Sceptics — who apparently include the Prime Minister — recognise that this policy would impinge on millions of law-abiding citizens, while not effectively tackling the hard core of persistent drink drivers.

Attitudes towards drinking and driving have changed dramatically over the past two decades. The days when it was common for motorists to enjoy "one for the road" are over. As a result, British roads are among the safest in Europe — even though the legal limit is 30mg higher than in seven EU countries, and 60mg higher than in Sweden. The number of deaths from drink-drive accidents fell from 1,640 in 1979 to 540 in 1997. As the decline in deaths has begun to slow, the Government wants to target the dwindling numbers who continue to drink and drive. While this is a laudable aim, cutting the legal limit is

the wrong way to achieve it. Motorists two and half times over the current 80mg limit cause half of all drink-driving related deaths. This hardened group is unlikely to change its behaviour if the level is reduced to 50mg. Ministers have been advised that, if they focused their efforts on these heavy drinkers, four times more deaths could be avoided than by cutting the overall limit. If the Government ignores this advice, it risks turning law-abiding citizens into criminals and undermining people's respect for the law.

An even more absurd argument in favour of changing the law has been made by Neil Kinnock, the EU Transport Commissioner. He believes that Britain's legal limit should be brought into line with other EU countries. Not only does this run entirely counter to the principle of subsidiarity: it defies reality. If there is any copying to be done, other EU countries should be matching British practice.

The public respects the drink-driving laws as they stand. Further moves to crack down on serious offenders would be supported. Yet lowering the limit would be an unacceptable, unnecessary act, making millions of drivers the victims of the Government's bossiness.

## Impeachment and the rule of law

From Dr Robert McGeehan

Sir, The United States Constitution envisages impeachment as a procedure whose objects, in the words of the founders, include "the abuse or violation of some public trust". Perjury, or intentionally lying under oath when solemnly sworn to tell the truth, is a criminal offence which leading scholars on November 9 testified to the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives falls within the intended meaning of the founders' language referring to "high crimes and misdemeanours" (report, November 10).

John Chockman (letter, December 28) writes that impeachment is a remedy against "an executive threatening the liberties of the people". He is correct: since there can be no liberty without the rule of law, any undermining of the equal application of the law to every citizen threatens the freedom of all. Impeachment, therefore, is the appropriate constitutional step.

In the effort not to lose sight of what is really at stake in America's tawdry but serious presidential (but not constitutional) crisis, receding the non-sense that criminal falsehoods are somehow excusable if they can be packaged as sexual prevarication is deeply subversive of our liberty under the rule of law.

Yours faithfully,  
ROBERT MCGEEHAN,  
Cooks Corner Farm,  
Freeland, Oxfordshire OX8 8HW.  
January 7.

From Mr D. G. Appleton

Sir, How could such an august assembly as the House of Representatives so cripple a president and seriously damage the prestige and international authority of the United States?

Under the Anglo-Saxon legal conventions there exists such a thing as frivolous and vexatious litigation. The inquiry to which President Clinton has been subjected falls squarely within the scope of that concept. The obvious conclusion is that the whole business should be set aside and the Starr report and its author left to oblivion.

What the world has witnessed is not so much a legal process as a surpassing example of puritanical self-righteousness and hypocrisy, vindictiveness and turpitude. Is it too much to hope that the Senate will have the courage to recognise this and to set at naught the disastrous act of folly of the House?

Yours faithfully,  
D. G. APPLETON,  
5 Stoney Road, Taunton TA2 7NP.  
January 7.

## Sheffield housing

From Mr Sue Powell

Sir, Mr George Wedd (letter, January 5) rightly defends the recently listed Park Hill flats in Sheffield against those of your earlier correspondents (December 30) who argue for whole-scale demolition.

Building buildings is a dubious approach to social and urban reform, and advocates of the demolition of Park Hill should surely learn from the past. Is it not contradictory to condemn the clearance policies of the Sixties (when most people agreed that Victorian "slums" should be torn down) and yet advocate a new clearance campaign for postwar housing? In Leeds, the huge Quarry Hill estate, a monumental housing project of the 1930s, was demolished in the early Eighties. It could have been refurbished as low-cost housing, for example, for students. It has been replaced by an undistinguished jumble of Post-Modernist structures — and a great deal of ill-kept grass and car-parking.

Is this progress? We have a duty to make Park Hill work.

Yours sincerely,  
SUE POWELL,  
7 Woodbine Terrace,  
Headingley, Leeds LS6 4AF.  
January 6.

## Misuse of funds

From Mr J. K. M. Krawiec

Sir, Stephen Silber, QC, is quite correct ("Misuse of funds: civil servants who slip up", Law, January 5): a new law is needed on the misuse of public office.

However, such a law ought to apply not only to local government but also to all areas of the public sector, including both officials and politicians in central government.

Local government in Britain has a far higher standard of ethics than in other countries, and other parts of the public sector ought to be brought up to this standard.

Yours faithfully,  
J. K. M. KRAWIEC  
(Chief Executive and Town Clerk),  
Southend-on-Sea Borough Council,  
PO Box 6, Civic Centre,  
Victoria Avenue,  
Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6ER.  
January 5.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

## Christian compassion for refugees

From Dr R. E. Bancroft-Marcus

Sir, Archbishop Carey is right to appeal for more compassion for refugees, but the examples of successful integration cited by him and *The Times* (report, January 1) could have been better chosen.

To me, a refugee is someone who flees for his life to escape an advancing army or the threat of political assassination. Einstein may indeed have fled Nazi persecution, but he enjoyed an established reputation before leaving Germany to continue, not begin, his brilliant career. Chagall worked for the communist regime and left Russia as a result of an aesthetic dispute.

Markus, already a successful film star, left Germany before Hitler came to power; his motivation was fame and fortune in Hollywood, and his inclusion in the Archbishop's list strikes me as particularly insulting to all past and present victims of real persecution.

Those lucky enough to have sufficient wealth and international connections to leave a country at a time of their choosing and take up prosperous residence elsewhere are surely not refugees, but up-market economic migrants. A penniless "true" refugee, whatever his talents or qualifications, who graduates from a detention camp to a job in McDonald's, starts his British career with no such advantages.

The villagers fleeing murderous forces (on both sides) in former Yugoslavia appear to me eminently worthy of a Christian's compassion and support, whether or not they can ever make any return or contribution to our culture. We should make every effort to avoid creating or acquiescing in any situation — especially poverty and famine — which may dislodge large numbers of our fellow humans from their homes and their native environment.

Yours sincerely,  
ROSEMARY E. BANCROFT-MARCUS,  
30 South Avenue, Abingdon,  
Oxfordshire OX14 1QR.  
jbmrem@aol.com  
January 1.

## Flu 'epidemic'

From the Director of the Royal College of General Practitioners

Sir, "How... do the powers that be know that there is no flu epidemic", asks Mr Ray Ellis (letter, January 7), if sufferers do not consult a doctor?

The number of persons identified with influenza-like illnesses is clearly based on those who consult and is inevitably an underestimate of the total sick population. Careful examination of the data we receive (especially the rates in differing age groups) allows us to make comparisons with influenza outbreaks in previous years.

It is on that basis that the word "epidemic" is applied and used in a national rather than a local context. We could on the one hand describe every winter outbreak of influenza as an epidemic and on the other hand confine its use to unusual situations.

The Shorter Oxford Dictionary provides two definitions of epidemic: Prevalent among a people or community at

a special time, and produced by some special cause not generally present in the affected locality. Widely prevalent, or universal.

It is in this context that we reserve the word epidemic for the more serious outbreaks, since influenza is "generally present" in winter. The incidence data published by the RCGP are based on aggregated national figures, and patterns commonly vary widely in different parts of the country.

On a more positive note, whilst there is as yet no curative treatment for influenza in regular use in this country, recent developments with a class of drugs known as neuraminidase inhibitors herald this prospect within two years.

Yours faithfully,  
DOUGLAS FLEMING,  
Director, Royal College of General Practitioners,  
Birmingham Research Unit,  
54 Ludwood Road,  
Birmingham B17 9DB.  
January 7.

ed, however), while a succession of conveniently placed palm court orchestras obligingly played highlights from his scores.

Since neither my father nor Mr Williams ever show any indication of recognising any of them, not even *Flordora*, the film has caused considerable merriment for several decades among those few of us ever able to locate a screening on some obscure cable station in the small hours. It did, however, prove a remarkable forerunner for such later bio-musical disasters as the Cole Porter story, *Night and Day*, and the curious thing about *You Will Remember* is that nobody, not even Mr Milnes, ever does.

Yours sincerely,  
SHERIDAN MORLEY,  
5 Admiral Square,  
Chelsea Harbour, SW10 0UU.

## Leslie Stuart recalled

From Mr Sheridan Morley

Sir, Rodney Milnes's characteristic expert and enthralling account of the long-lost composer Leslie Stuart ("A toast to the Flordora man", Arts, December 30) omits one crucial detail. Stuart was among the very first British theatrical composers, ahead even of Gilbert and Sullivan, to have an entire film made of his life and music, albeit one of considerable eccentricity.

*You Will Remember* (1940), a title which in itself conveys unusual confidence since audiences could already have been expected to have almost entirely forgotten Stuart, consisted very largely of my late father Robert being wheeled along several British piers in a bathchair by Evelyn Williams (no gay relationship was indicated,

## Greenwich redstarts

From Mr D. Gedge

Sir, As one of the local ornithologists studying black redstarts along the Thames Corridor I welcome any publicity about this remarkable species. I would, however, like to clarify one of the points made in your report today, headed "Bombastic bird" threatens to stop work on the Dome" (see also letter, December 6).

For some two years I have been aware of two pairs of these birds which have bred on the Greenwich peninsula, well away from the Dome site. I also know that, contrary to your report, all three of the pairs to which I refer bred on Deptford Creek and in Charlton, either side of the site.

With adequate monitoring and understanding of any birds found, the closing of the Dome site could be easily avoided. The site as it is now, and as it will be over the next few months, will be a perfect place for black redstarts to breed. This will change, however, as the Dome and its surrounds are tidied up with manicured parks, new trees and buildings.

Here is an ideal opportunity for all concerned — the New Millennium Experience Company, English Partnerships, Greenwich Council and conservation bodies such as the

London Wildlife Trust — to devise a conservation success right at the heart of the millennium celebrations, setting a precedent for all the other sites where black redstarts breed along the Thames Corridor.

I realise that the Dome is the media's *bête noire* at the moment; but it saddens me that you have to enlist a very charming and rare bird to have a dig at the likes of Peter Mandelson and Lord Falconer.

Yours sincerely,  
D. GEDGE,  
7 Dartmouth Grove, SE10 8AR.  
January 5.

From the Chief Executive of the New Millennium Experience Company

Sir, Despite your diarist's front-page report claiming that nesting redstarts will interrupt work on the Dome, no sighting and no records of sightings on the Dome site exist with NMEC or the Environment Agency, or indeed with the London Wildlife Trust.

Is this a canard, or the first cuckoo of 1999?

Yours faithfully,  
JENNIFER PAGE,  
Chief Executive, New Millennium Experience Company,  
110 Buckingham Palace Road,  
London SW1 9SB.

## New year revels — and the day after

From Mr John Hall

Sir, From our house perched at 2,000 feet in the Italian Marches we see and hear with delight fireworks sprouting and detonating from all the ten or so near or distant hilltop towns of our area. This merry welcome to a new year is a gesture of traditional extravagance on the part of otherwise tight-fisted municipalities.

After consuming a sequence of pastas, then pigs' trotters with lentils, then *dolci* with *spumante*, most of the populations, average 5,000, will be in the piazza watching the fun, feeling good. Fireworks are exhilarating!

The recently revived Venice Carnival used to end with a magnificent fireworks display in the Basin of St Mark's. Since the grand finale, the one event all Venetians looked forward to, was cut — who knows why — it has lost its civic spirit and is merely commercial tourism.

Watching on television the fine new year fireworks round the world, from Sydney to New York to Edinburgh, we wondered why Londoners aren't given a treat. Instead, we watched them being warned by policemen not to go to Trafalgar Square.

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN HALL,  
Contrada Scienzia 84,  
62026 San Ginesio,  
Macerata, Italy.  
January 1.

From Ms Harriet Lyall

Sir, The afternoon of January 1, 1999, had a nightmare quality in south Edinburgh (report, "Six cities vie to be party capital of 1998", December 31).

Along Bruntsfield Links, the pavements were heaped high with rubbish and strewn with broken glass. Pools of vomit lay in stair emeries. Young people wandered aimlessly, faces drained and blank in the sulphur glare of the street lights. I was ashamed of my city, and angry that commercialism had given such a sordid aspect to the traditional Scottish new year.

By becoming the capital of Planet Hogmanay, the city boasts it has "made" £30 million. It is a strange irony that, in order to create this wealth, it seems necessary to destroy the very environment for whose care and enhancement the money is presumably intended.

Yours,  
HARRIET LYALL,  
69 Merchiston Crescent,  
Edinburgh EH10 5AQ.  
January 4.

## Books for schools

From Mr John F. Allen

Sir, I write to applaud your Free Books for Schools efforts and your leading article, "Collection days" (January 4).

Approaching my 70th birthday, I clearly remember walking home with great pride from primary school, clutching my first prize for reading, a volume of *Aesop's Fables*. Since that day books have been my constant companions. Encouraged by my mother to join the public library at an early age, I have been a member since the 1930s.

I believe that children should be encouraged to love books and to realise that with books on the shelf one is never without a friend. My collection exceeds 200 volumes, many autographed by their authors, I refer to them regularly, sometimes just to hold and admire, because my historical reference books tell me so much in my hobby as a war and aviation historian.

Keep up the good work, literacy is paramount: it holds the key to the future.

Yours faithfully,  
JOHN F. ALLEN,  
Arnewood, 31 Lynwood Drive,  
Merley, Wimborne BH21 1UT.  
January 4.

## That sinking feeling

From Mr Richard Burt

Sir, With regard to Mr Frederick King's ambition (letter, January 5) to tip cutlery-free water from washing-up bowls, it was standard procedure, whilst emptying a "fanny" (ie. a large bowl) full of washing-up water down the "gash chute" of a destroyer at sea, to quote whilst doing so: "Tinkle, tinkle little spoon, knife and fork will follow soon."

They invariably did!

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD BURT,  
20 Prestbury Crescent,  
Woodmansterne,  
Banstead, Surrey SM7 3PJ.  
January 5.

## Romance of the road

From Mr Richard Need

Sir, I have often thought that it would be fun to have roadside notices on the M25, where the meridian crosses it near Waltham Abbey to the north and Limsfield to the south, announcing to motorists: "You are now entering the eastern (western) hemisphere."

Yours faithfully,  
RICHARD NEED,  
11 Hemmingsford Road,  
Cham, Surrey SM3 8HG.  
January 2.











## NEWS

## The President goes on trial

The trial to determine whether William Jefferson Clinton becomes the first President in American history to be removed from office by the Senate opened to solemn ceremonies not witnessed for 130 years.

But behind the stately scenes prescribed by the Constitution, party leaders' attempts to thrash out the rules of a trial with only one precedent remained in chaos. An appalled nation began to contemplate the prospect that the trial could spin into an uncontrollable partisan bloodbath. Pages 1, 2, 3.

## Building society questions Mandelson

Peter Mandelson has been questioned by building society investigators as officials consider reporting him to police over allegations about his mortgage application. Pages 1, 10.

## Meningitis case

The eight-month-old daughter of Olympic athlete Judy Simpson has died of meningitis. Page 1.

## Cancer prevention

Scientists have isolated a gene that plays a vital role in the development of many of the most common forms of cancer. At least half of all cancers may eventually become preventable. Pages 1, 2.

## Back to work

For Prince Edward work comes first. After all the fuss and photo-calls he was back where he feels he belongs, behind his desk at Ardent Productions, his TV production company. Page 7.

## Airstrikes terror

The British servicemen and women who took part in the airstrikes against Iraq spoke of the terror of combat and their fear of hitting civilian targets as they arrived back in Scotland. Page 9.

## Schools cash

Parents will be able to compare how local education authorities divide their cash between the classroom and administration in new league tables. Page 12.

## New passion

Nigel Mansell has swapped racing cars for the "motor yacht of the millennium" — and says he gets more satisfaction out of boating than Formula One. Page 13.

## Staples of life: rabbits and corsets

A detailed insight into major trends in British life took the late 1940s as its starting point as the official yearbook of the United Kingdom celebrated its 50th edition. In 1947 the retail price index included: wild rabbits, lard, condensed milk, back-lacing corsets, lamp oil, an iron bedstead, a hair mattress, a rubber-roller table mangle, distemper, and a wireless licence. Page 6.

## Caledonian culture

Scottish societies in the United States with extreme views about a pure white Caledonian culture are forging links with the Scottish National Party. Page 14.

## Party house fire

A couple and their daughter died early when fire swept through the family home hours after a 21st birthday party. Page 15.

## Bleak outlook

Fifty years after Viscount Montgomery's pessimistic forecasts for the future of Africa, the outlook remains bleak. Page 16.

## Union Jack burnt

Hundreds of South African Muslims burnt the Union Jack outside the British High Commission and pledged to disrupt Tony Blair's visit after being dispersed with stun grenades. Page 17.

## Spying on Iraq

American officials, reacting to leaks from senior United Nations officials, confirmed Iraq's long-standing suspicions that US spies worked under cover as UN weapons inspectors. Page 18.

## Police chief goes

Malaysia's police chief resigned after taking full responsibility for injuries inflicted on Anwar Ibrahim, the former Finance Minister, while he was in police custody three months ago. Page 19.



Dark red Sussex cattle are being brought back to meadows around Down House in Kent where Charles Darwin lived for 40 years

## Rate falls: Interest rates are on the way down again after the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee cut base rates by a further 0.25 per cent to 6 per cent. Page 27.

## Barclays settles: Barclays led a £150 million settlement over the 1990 collapse of British and Commonwealth Holdings. Page 27.

## Sales slow: Littlewoods, the family-owned retail group, was left disappointed by a slowdown in sales growth ahead of the expected Christmas boom. Page 27.

## Markets: The FTSE 100 index fell 47.60 points to 6101.2. The pound fell 0.64 cents to \$1.6496 and rose 0.03p against the euro to 70.74p. The sterling index fell to 99.0 from 99.2. Page 30.

## Tennis: The International Tennis Federation may be forced to ban Petr Korda, the Australian Open champion from the Czech Republic, who was fined for failing a drugs test at Wimbledon. Page 52.

## Basketball: Embattled National Basketball Association leaders are banking on Michael Jordan to rescue their season. Page 46.

## Rugby union: Angry English clubs have joined forces to threaten legal action against the clubs' English first division rugby if they go ahead with plans for an Anglo-Welsh league. Page 48.

## Golf: The opening rounds of the President's Cup gave a feeling of déjà vu to Jamie Warman, who once again went out of the tournament to Neil Fabbri. Page 49.

## Richard Morrison: "I have just read through a splendid book: a tome which restores my faith in the inspirational power of the arts". Now read on. Page 38.

Drama kings: The RSC has a stronger-than-usual stab at late Shakespeare with Gregory Doran's absorbing *The Winter's Tale*; plus Brecht's *The Life of Edward the Second of England*. Page 38.

## Pop 1: The week's top new albums reviewed by David Sinclair; plus interviews with Nigerian star Femi Kuti and America's unsung band Ednaswap. Page 39.

## Pop 2: A year ago the all-girl group All Saints were the elegant antidote to national Spice Girls overload. What went wrong? Caitlin Moran has the answers. Page 40.

## Rank outsider: Calum Maclean says he was "treated like a dog" and suffered "verbal rape" in the Royal Navy because he was homosexual. Now he and others are challenging the armed forces. Page 20.

## Jane Shilling: "There is said to come a moment in every woman's life when her interest in buying pretty things for herself is overtaken by her interest in buying pretty things for the house". Page 21.

## Learning curve: What makes some people decide to train teachers rather than to teach children? Do they have the right motivation? Page 36.

## Future of Learning: 16-page supplement on teaching and technology.

State of play: Will the politician Geoffrey Robinson hang on to the *New Statesman*? Page 42.

## Raymond Snoddy: Research into how television ads drive consumer purchases. Page 44.

A full impeachment trial is the only way irrevocably to resolve the question of whether Mr Clinton is fit to hold the office of president. Either way, Washington can get back to the business of governance. The Senate has a responsibility to put the Lewinsky mess behind us. — *The Washington Times*.State of play: Will the politician Geoffrey Robinson hang on to the *New Statesman*? Page 42.

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Preview: New series starts with Geri Halliwell: *Parkinson* (BB) 9.30pm. Review: The line between earnest social concern and voyeuristic sensationalism is a very fine one: *Dispatches*. Pages 50, 51.

## What Monty saw

Africans today are poorer than when Monty sought to make of the socialist Azites and improbable second Cecil Rhodes. Page 23.

## Bring forth the forms

Mr Mandelson has placed himself and the Britannia Building Society in a difficult position. He should now embrace candour. Page 23.

## Know your limit

The public respects the drink-driving laws as they stand. To lower the limit would be an unacceptable, and unnecessary, act. Page 23.

## JONATHAN SACKS

The Millennium Dome is probably the first great national symbol about which no one is altogether sure what it symbolises. It has to do with a profound crisis in our sense of time. Page 22.

## MARY ANN SIEGHART

If you had looked round a state primary school in the 1970s and found pegs labelled Chloe, Jessica and Georgia, or Thomas, James and Luke, you would have assumed that its catchment area was middle-class. Now it is just as likely to be on a council estate. You can no longer tell a child's background from its name. Page 22.

## PHILIP HOWARD

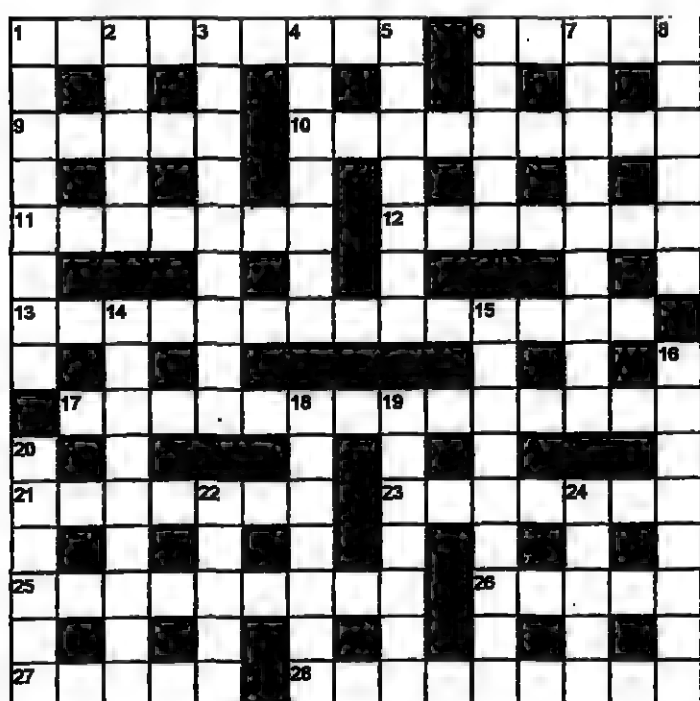
The cure for admiring the House of Lords is to go and look at it... The cure for believing that Fingers Ain't What They Used To Be is to have been stormbound for the past fortnight. Page 22.

Henrietta Moraes, model; Kenneth Duke, historian; Michel Petrucci, pianist. Page 25.

Impeachment refugees; New Year flu epidemic; housing; books for schools. Page 23.

2, 11, 18, 21, 23, 47, Bonus 27

## THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,995



## ACROSS

- 1 Cut down on work but somehow got in, of course (9).
- 6 Pierced one's skin (5).
- 9 Communication channels in Iran's territory once (8).
- 10 This roamed all over the place in desert conditions (9).
- 11 Fighter with power halved is cleaner (7).
- 12 Whence flows prosperity after a strike? (3,4).
- 13 Relatively large group? (8,6).
- 17 Prepare to fight to make improvements (5,9).
- 21 Establish where cattle may be? (7).
- 23 He may get a punch, having trouble gaining entry (7).
- 25 Plan of Berlin put out (9).
- 26 Persistent type of judge? (5).

## DOWN

- 2 Minute appears years to adolescent (5).
- 8 Doubt one's tried to smash earlier record (9).
- 1 Extremely deceptive title, but one clearly screen film (8).
- 2 Source of milk shake? Not initially (5).
- 3 Catch the swine pinching new harness (9).
- 4 Confirm death — animal has been beheaded (7).
- 5 Know-all explains why theatre's closed (4-3).
- 6 Original American line accepted — there may be a catch in it (5).
- 7 Borrow, say, from one who may have some cheques (9).
- 8 Classic sea hazard that is capsize-ing mate (6).
- 14 Fundamentally change exercises — one's left speechless (9).
- 15 Where New Testament may be briefly read in Christmas season? (9).
- 16 Invite trouble, like *Oliver Twist* wanting more? (3,3,2).
- 18 Took action about learners — one produced bad marks (7).
- 19 A noble Roman moving right up tree (7).
- 20 Raised large stake as place for execution (6).
- 22 Like a fruit? Put in request (5).
- 24 I struggled to get into such an elite college? (5).

## Solution to Puzzle No 20,994



## Latest Road and Weather conditions

UK Weather: All regions 0336 444 010  
UK Roads: All regions 0336 444 010  
UK Weather: All regions 0336 444 010  
UK Roads: All regions 0336 444 010

## Weather by Fax

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## World City Weather

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Car reports by fax

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Call our year for handouts

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Sun rises: 8:04 am

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Sun sets: 4:10 pm

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Moon rises: 11:42 pm

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Last quarter tomorrow

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## London 4:30 pm to 8:13 am

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Edinburgh 3:59 pm to 8:40 am

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
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0336 444 010

## Manchester 4:05 pm to 8:22 am

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## Preston 4:35 pm to 8:15 am

0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010  
0336 444 010

## General: much colder. N England and Midlands cloudy with outbreaks of rain, then scattered showers, some windy. Shores and a brisk wind in Wales and S England. N Ireland will have heavy downpours; hail and thunder possible. Sunny spells, showers in Scotland, the showers turning to snow as chilly NE wind develops. Tonight, cold, generally dry inland with a frost. Sea and snow showers on E coasts and in N and W areas.

## Channel Is, SW England, Wales: scattered heavy showers; a few bright spells. Freshening W to NW wind. Max 10C (49F).

## Brands, E, W, S, SW, SE, S, G, G, G: early rain; sunny spells, showers; sleet, snow on hills. Mod fresh NE wind. Max 6C (43F).

## Aberdeen, Cent Highlands, Moray Firth, NE, NW, Scotland, Argyll, Orkney, Shetland: showers, turning to sleet and snow. A few bright spells. Mod NE wind. Max 1C (34F).

## N Ireland: heavy and thundery showers; hail possible. Fresh NE wind. Max 5C (41F).

## Rip of Ireland: showers rain clearing. Wind blustery west, then N. Max 7C (45F).

## Outlook: cold with sunny spells. Windy showers. Sharp overnight frosts.

## London, SE, Cent S England: sunny spells; windy, showers later. Fresh to strong W wind. Max 9C (48F).

## E Ang, Midlands, E, NW, Cent N, NE Eng, Wales, I, I, I: rain; windy showers later. Fresh W wind, becoming NE. Max 7C (45F).

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# THE TIMES

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**2**  
TODAY



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UK builders are  
targeting a new  
wave of customers  
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son of a giant  
of World Music  
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the make-or-break  
business  
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**SCHOOL  
TAKES A  
HOLIDAY**  
Education  
Pages 34-37

BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

FRIDAY JANUARY 8 1999

## Barclays leads £150m Atlantic settlement



Gunn: says he is vindicated

By JASON NISSE  
A VEIL was drawn over one of the greatest financial disasters in City history yesterday when Barclays Bank led a £150 million settlement of litigation brought over the collapse in 1990 of British & Commonwealth Holdings, the financial conglomerate.

B&C, once a FTSE 100 company, was placed in administration with debts of more than £1 billion weeks after the collapse of its subsidiary, Atlantic Computers, the leasing business. Barclays, whose merchant banking subsidiary, Barclays de Zoete Wedd, advised B&C on its fateful £408 million purchase of Atlantic two years be-

fore its failure, is paying £116 million as part of the settlement of writs issued by Ernst & Young, the administrators of B&C, over the Atlantic deal. It also lent more than £100 million to B&C as the group's main banker, though most of this money has been recovered since B&C's collapse.

The writ, issued in 1994, originally claimed more than £500 million, which was the amount that B&C had to write off when Atlantic was placed in administration. This was reduced to £430 million early last year, though by the end of the year the interest bill had increased the total liability to more than £850 million.

The case, in which the administrators allege negligence by B&C in a host of City firms for not spotting the problems with Atlantic's finances that ultimately brought the leasing company down, was not due to come to court until May 2000 and was scheduled to last up to 18 months.

A complex settlement of the action, brokered by the Centre for Dispute Resolution, was agreed yesterday involving more than half a dozen parties from the City, though none accepted liabilities for B&C's losses. Barclays is paying £116 million, though more than £40 million of this will be covered by indemnity insurance. It kept its share of the liability despite selling B&C to Credit Suisse First

### BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES		
FTSE 100	6101.2	(-47.6)
Yield	2.68%	
FTSE All Share	2764.57	(-16.74)
Nikkei	13336.56	(+68.10)
New York:		
Dow Jones	9482.19	(-52.78)
S&P Composite	1288.67	(-3.67)
US RATE		
Federal Funds	4.75%	(3.75%)
Long bond	100%	(101%)
Yield	5.23%	(5.18%)
LONDON MONEY		
3mth interbank	6.75%	(6%)
Life long gilt	119.45	(119.16)
STERLING		
New York:	1.6492	(1.6558)
London:	1.6497	(1.6553)
\$	1.4133	(1.4133)
Sfr	2.2859	(2.2842)
Yen	183.35	(188.48)
£ index	99.0	(99.2)
DOLLAR		
London:	1.1672	(1.1615)
Sfr	1.3855	(1.3825)
Yen	111.68	(112.68)
£ index	103.3	(103.4)
Tokyo close Yen 110.92		
NORTH SEA OIL		
Brent 15-day (Mar)	\$11.30	(\$11.50)
GOLD		
London close	£290.05	(\$287.45)

\* denotes midday trading prices

## Bank brings base rate down to 6%

By JANET RUSH, ECONOMICS EDITOR

INTEREST rates are on the way down again, after the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee yesterday cut base rates by a further 0.25 per cent to 6 per cent.

The reduction, which had not been widely expected in the City after three months of cuts, returned base rates to the level prevailing when Labour came to power in May 1997.

Condon Brown, the Chancellor, handed rate decisions to the Bank shortly afterwards.

In a statement explaining its decision yesterday the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) cited clear risks to growth from the situation in the international economy. On the domestic front it pointed to evidence that the labour market had reached

a turning point and that the upward pressure on wages appeared to have eased.

The move was widely welcomed by business and industry but left some voices asking for more. Kate Barker, chief economic adviser at the Confederation of British Industry, said that yesterday's quarter-point cut was unlikely to dispel industry's new year blues. "Further rate cuts will be needed to ward off the danger of outright recession. We believe that rates should be down towards 5 per cent by the spring," she said.

Interest rate futures rose sharply after the MPC announcement and are now pricing in base rates of 5 per cent by the end of this year.

Ian Peters, deputy director-general of the British Chambers of Commerce, said: "Our ultimate objective must be to bring UK interest rates into line with our competitors in the new eurozone as soon as possible."

Yesterday's cut closed the gap with Europe a little but, at 6 per cent, British base rates are still double the 3 per cent prevailing in euroland. The European Central Bank's council met yesterday and left rates unchanged. Denmark, however, another country that has opted out of the euro so far, cut its key rates by a fifth of a point to 3.75 per cent.

Earlier yesterday the CBI published its monthly distributional survey, showing a slight improvement in retail sales volumes in December.

Although this provided evidence that the Christmas shopping season had not been as bad as many retailers had warned, it did not deter the MPC from cutting rates again in view of other weak surveys in recent days from manufac-

turing and service industries. On the stock market the FTSE 100 index of leading shares briefly rallied on news of the unexpected rate cut but then slid again as investors took profits after this week's surge to near record highs.

The FTSE closed 47.6 points lower at 6101.2, though this is a relatively small proportion of Wednesday's 190-point rise. Sterling was left unmoved by yesterday's rate cut, ending unchanged from Wednesday's close on its index against a basket of currencies at 99.0.

European bourses, many of which had hit records on Wednesday, also fell prey to profit-taking yesterday and the euro fell victim to a surge in the yen which hit a 27-month high of ¥109.82 against the dollar.

The euro fell to ¥128 in Far Eastern trading overnight, its lowest level since its launch on Monday. Part of the yen's strength this week has been due to the unwinding of complex investment positions in Japanese government bonds.

More than this, however, is a perception of increasing fragility in the dollar. Yesterday, the US currency was undermined by worries about impeachment proceedings and partly because of financial troubles in Brazil.

The third-largest Brazilian state called a 90-day debt moratorium on its payments to the central government, a development that sent shivers through Wall Street because Brazil buys 20 per cent of all US exports.

By early afternoon the Dow Jones industrial average was down 79.5 points at 9,465.42, reversing some of Wednesday's record-breaking run.

Commentary, page 29



If Enic buys Wembley, owner of the national football stadium, it need not prevent it from being rebuilt for a World Cup bid

## Enic to tackle Wembley with cash and shares bid

By ADAM JONES

ENIC, the football and leisure group, is trying to buy Wembley, the owner of the national football stadium, in a move that throws England's troubled bid for the 2006 World Cup further into doubt.

Wembley shares surged 55p to 367.5p, valuing the company at more than £200 million, after it admitted that it had received a takeover approach.

Enic, which has stakes in various European football clubs, including Glasgow Rangers, is thought to be offering a mix of cash and shares for Wembley, which also owns Wembley Arena and the conference centre, as well as US race tracks. Wem-

bley's executive directors are thought to have looked unfavourably on the cash-and-shares approach. Enic shares have tumbled from 292.5p to 123.5p in the past year.

Wembley Stadium needs to be rebuilt for the World Cup bid. For this to happen, Wembley plc - which is not eligible for National Lottery funding - had agreed to sell the stadium to a qualifying trust, the English National Stadium Development Company.

The £103 million sale was agreed by the board despite objections by some non-executives, understood to be Peter Mead, chairman of Abbott Mead Vick-

ers, the advertising agency; Jarvis Astaire, a promoter; and Roger Brooke, chairman of Candover, the venture capitalist. It is understood that the deal to sell the stadium to the trust, which will ultimately be controlled by the Football Association, could be signed in the next few days after Customs & Excise confirmed that it will not be subject to VAT.

However, the deal will not be finalised until it is passed by Wembley plc shareholders, allowing a hostile bidder room to scupper the sale. A source close to the negotiations said it was not necessarily the case that Enic would scrap the sale.

### Volvo car division rumours persist

By CARL MORTIMORE, INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS EDITOR

TAKEOVER speculation continues to swirl around Volvo, the Swedish car and truck manufacturer, as leading Swedish institutions confirmed their interest in a sale of the group's car division.

Volvo refused to comment on reports that the company had appointed JP Morgan, the US investment bank, to advise on a sale or merger of its automobile division which accounts for about half of group sales and profits.

However, the Volvo "B" share price continued to rise on hopes that the company could secure up to £4 billion for the car maker.

Volvo's stock has gained more than 20 per cent over the past week as rumours of a deal with Ford, Fiat or Volkswagen, gain ground.

Major shareholders of Volvo, including Robur, AMF and Skandia Insurance, accounting for a fifth of the equity, indicated they were not averse to such a move if terms were acceptable.

Chris Wills, analyst at Lehman Bros, said Ford would be the ideal partner as the US company already manufactures large cars and could provide the platform for new Volvo models. "Ford would get into a higher-margin car business. It could share engines and launch Volvos more cheaply."

## Littlewoods disappoints on two fronts

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM

LITTLEWOODS, the family-owned retail group, was left disappointed by a slowdown in sales growth at its high street stores and catalogue operation ahead of Christmas, and said it expects the retail sector to remain in the doldrums until autumn at the earliest.

Barry Gibson, chief executive of the Liverpool-based group, which is owned by the Moores family, said that underlying sales growth in the key nine weeks to January 2 slowed to 2 per cent. This compares with 8 per cent year-on-year growth in the preceding six months.

Clothing was by far the worst-performing part of the business. Some consumer durables, such as mobile phones, sold very well, helping to boost the performance

of the index Extra combined high street/catalogue business.

Mr Gibson said that sales were noticeably weaker in the north of the country. "In areas where there is a dependency on manufacturing there is a very marked slowdown in-

flated platinum credit card accounts of Wall Street's bonus recipients, the company said: "Healthy sales growth was achieved in all of Tiffany's channels of distribution, led by strong comparable store sales increases in the US and Japan."

William Chaney, chairman of Tiffany, said: "We will continue to focus on Tiffany's

proven growth strategies and supporting it with impactful merchandising and marketing initiatives."

Mr Chaney also announced a change in the ownership structure of the company. Mikoski, one of the top Japanese retail groups, said it will sell its 12 per cent stake. Tiffany shares rose \$5 to \$57 after the announcement.

the market leader Marks & Spencer, as well as Sainsbury's and Arcadia, had to discount heavily ahead of Christmas to clear seasonal stock. All three will report on their Christmas trading later this month.

Next, another leading clothing retailer, gave a cheerier view of the market on Wednesday, but it is thought by analysts to be the exception rather than the rule.

As at Next, Littlewoods said that its catalogue business had performed less well than the high street stores.

Home shopping sales at Littlewoods were up just 1 per cent in the nine-week period, compared with a 3 per cent rise in the high street stores. Mr Gibson said that discounting on the high street had hit catalogue sales because the latter were unable to lower prices once they were printed.

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## Decision over ING Barings delayed

By Paul Durman

The future of ING Barings, the investment banking arm of the Dutch financial group, is to be decided next month.

ING's management board discussed the fate of Barings earlier this week, but David Robins, chief executive since last October, has been given another month to complete his strategic review. ING Barings ran up losses and provisions of about 2 billion guilders (£645 million) in the first nine months of last year, highlighting its exposure to emerging markets. The bank is expected to embark on another round of restructuring, after deciding to cut 1,200 jobs last autumn. A spokesman suggested sale or closure was not on the agenda.

He said: "ING has always retained its commitment to the business and corporate and investment banking in general. It is a core activity that it has to keep going if it is going to serve its clients. The nuclear option [closure or sale] is not on the cards."

Godfried van der Lugt, chairman of ING, recently told staff that the group would have to accept a fall in business from emerging markets - previously a focus of its investment.

He said the key aims of the new strategy "are greater stability in ING Barings' results and improved profitability. We shall remain active in emerging markets and the US, but the emphasis will clearly be on the countries of Western Europe."

Responsibility for ING Barings on the group's executive board now rests with Michel Tilmant, who is also president of BBL and chairman of the executive committee for ING Belgium.

ING Barings employs about 9,000 staff, including about 1,700 in the UK.

# Sales surge fails to lift motor industry doubts

By Arthur Leathley  
Transport Correspondent

FRESH doubts emerged over the future of some of the best-known motor manufacturers last night amid forecasts of heavy falls in sales this year.

The motor industry, fresh from a successful sales year in 1998, is braced for an 8.8 per cent fall prompted by economic uncertainty.

A late flurry of sales activity in December lifted the number of registrations last year to 2.2 million, slightly below the record 2.3 million figure for 1998.

But manufacturers expect a sharp downturn this year to coincide with a series of mergers and takeovers involving

## TOP TEN SELLING MODELS FOR 1998

1. Ford Fiesta
2. Ford Escort
3. Ford Mondeo
4. Vauxhall Vectra
5. Renault Megane

6. Vauxhall Astra
7. Vauxhall Corsa
8. Peugeot 306
9. Rover 200
10. Rover 400

some of the biggest names in the industry.

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) admitted surprise yesterday at the late sales surge, which pushed December figures 13.8 per cent above the corresponding month in 1997.

However, they fear that a slowdown in 1999 is likely to take the gloss off the first year

in which new registration plates are issued twice, in March and September. Predictions of an 8.8 per cent fall would bring sales down to about 2.05 million.

Roger King, the SMMT's acting chief executive, said: "There will be a fall this year but we are not despondent because it comes after such good sales. We do expect a period of

consolidation among the manufacturers this year and there are clearly many more partnerships emerging between the main players.

"The effect of the plate change will take a while to work through the system, but eventually March may well become the lead month."

Ford took the first three places in the 1998 top sellers' list with its Fiesta, Escort and Mondeo models.

Ford was also the biggest-selling company overall last year, taking almost 17.9 per cent of the new car market.

Vauxhall stayed in second place, with a 12.5 per cent share, while Rover held on to third spot despite its share dipping from 10 per cent in 1997 to 8.6 per cent in 1998.

## Chicago clearing house in further \$2m loss

By Gavin Lumsden

FUTURES traders struggling to recover at least half of their money from Griffin Trading, the collapsed clearing house, face a new hurdle after fresh losses of up to \$2 million (£1.1 million) emerged at the firm's head office in Chicago.

Investigators of events behind Griffin's bankruptcy are believed to have uncovered unauthorised trading by Scott Szach, its chief financial officer, which is estimated to have cost the firm between \$1.5 million and \$2 million.

It is not clear whether Mr Szach's alleged dealings are connected with John Park, the Korean-born trader, whose \$6.2 million losses on German government bonds forced Griffin and GLH (Derivatives), a trading firm of which he was a member, into insolvency just before Christmas.

Griffin's collapse has caused consternation on the London International Financial Futures and Options Exchange (LIFFE). About 100 traders who used the clearing house have been temporarily forced out of business after a big chunk of their clients' money was taken by Mees Pierson, the Dutch bank which cleared deals on behalf of Griffin on Eures, the German futures exchange.

Despite this action, the bank is still facing losses of several million pounds.

Finbarr O'Connell, partner at accountants Grant Thornton and joint liquidator to Griffin, said \$3 million remained in the firm's client account in London.

Whether all of this was returned to traders depended on legal advice and their contracts, he said. The Securities and Futures Authority, however, said it would encourage an accelerated interim payout if there were difficulties.

The affair has shocked many traders, who mistakenly believed that client money had been "segregated" into separate accounts at Griffin, whereas in fact it had merely been ring-fenced from the firm's assets.



Acquisition trail: from left, Graeme Potts, Peter Vardy, chairman, and Ged Murray, finance director

## Reg Vardy to spend £35m

REG VARDY intends to challenge Jardine Motors for the number two position in the car dealership industry by spending a further £35 million to snap up its smaller rivals (Fraser Nelson writes).

Graeme Potts, chief executive, said the company is looking for dealerships in Scotland, Yorkshire and the Midlands. It is also considering Birmingham and Brighton.

He said: "The market is consolidating, and this gives us opportunity to fill in the geographical gaps we have. The whole thing is still very fragmented; we are third-largest, with almost 70 dealerships and there are about 6,000 in the UK."

The new acquisitions would be funded by taking out extra borrowings.

Mr Potts said he is prepared to increase gearing from 40 to 75 per cent, which would be £77 million.

Last year, it spent £35 million buying Trust Motors - comprising ten dealerships - and six other dealerships in England.

This helped pre-tax profits to £12.3 million (£8.41 million) in the six months to October 31 taking earnings to 14.7p (10.5p) per share. The interim dividend rises to 3.2p (2.8p).

Tempus, page 30

## BP Amoco to shed 900 jobs in UK

BP AMOCO is shedding 900 jobs in the UK in a bid to restore profits in the upstream exploration business. Staff in Aberdeen and at Amoco's London office were given the news just days after the merger between the British and US companies became official. A spokesman for BP said that 200 jobs would be lost in onshore administrative and among technical staff in Aberdeen. A further 490 jobs will go at Amoco's UK headquarters at Hanger Lane in West London. Other jobs will be lost in Uxbridge, Middlesbrough, and elsewhere.

The redundancies announced yesterday are unlikely to be the end of the matter. BP has indicated that job losses are likely to be more than the 600 worldwide previously indicated. The speed with which Sir John Browne, chief executive, has wielded the axe indicates the sense of emergency at BP Amoco over the low oil price. Current estimates put the cost of producing a North Sea barrel at \$12. The oil price last night was \$11.67.

## Wolseley US growth

WOLSELEY, the building merchants, has completed the acquisition of four American distribution businesses for \$68 million (£41 million). It said the businesses will add \$158 million to annual group sales, which stood at \$4.76 billion in 1998. The businesses include Fields & Co of Lubbock, a distributor based in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Alabama. Wolseley shares, which stood as high as 556p last year, rose from 362 1/2p to 370p yesterday.

## British Gas price cuts

GAS prices for about ten million customers are to fall by about 15 pence a year as British Gas starts a new charging plan. Households that pay quarterly bills on time will see bills cut by 2 pence in March. A further million who have pre-payment meters will have a reduction of 1.5 pence. Those paying by monthly direct debit, who have the cheapest tariffs, will have bills frozen. Separately, British Gas said it had recruited 800,000 electricity customers as deregulation in domestic power spreads.

## BBA bug warning

UK BANKS have given warning that one in four small or medium-sized business are at "high risk" from the millennium bug because they have failed to identify the potential threat to their supply chains. A report by the British Bankers Association said that the wholesale and retail distribution sector is "particularly vulnerable". A BBA spokesman said: "Many businesses are making the mistake of regarding the year 2000 problem as solely an IT issue."

## Leisure deal aborted

THE proposed takeover of Lady In Leisure, the operator of health and fitness clubs, by South Country Homes was aborted yesterday. Lady In Leisure, whose shares fell 17 1/2p to 162 1/2p yesterday, said the two companies had been unable to agree terms. Shares in South Country Homes remain suspended at 44 1/2p as the company has entered negotiations over the reverse takeover of a private leisure business. The company said a further announcement was likely within four weeks.

## P&O shares dip

SHARES of P&O fell 38 1/2p to 635p despite an upbeat trading statement from the cruises division. Princess Cruises, based in America, lifted the passenger berth days sold in the fourth quarter to 1.2 million from 988,315 the previous year. P&O Cruises (UK) rose to 386.723 (224.450). P&O has increased capacity for 1999 and says bookings are ahead of last year. However, analysts have cut profit forecasts because of worries that the company is failing to sell enough high-yield, long-distance cruises.

## Methven's open offer

METHVEN'S, the retail bookseller, is raising £1.6 million through a placing and open offer at 30p per share to fund new branch openings. The company reported pre-tax losses of £23,000 for the year ended September 30, compared with a loss of £5,000 last time. Turnover was up 44 per cent at £5.2 million and like-for-like sales were up 10.7 per cent. There is again no dividend. Exceptional costs were £113,000, with the company's bookshops increasing from five to eight.

## Abbey issues warning

ABBEY, the property and plant hire group based in the Irish Republic, reported improved interim results, but, in order to curb the "irrational exuberance" of some analysts, issued a profits warning for the second half. Pre-tax profit was IR£9.9 million (£8.8 million) for the six months to October 31, from IR£7.6 million last time. Earnings per share were IR£17.56p (IR£13.08p) and turnover was IR£44.7 million (IR£39.8 million). The interim dividend is up 17 per cent at IR£3.5p.

Bank	Bank	Bank	Bank	
Buy	Sell	Buy	Sell	
Australia \$	2.70	2.52	198.69	181.16
Austria Sch	20.48	18.82	0.859	0.80
Belgium Fr	60.28	55.32	3.310	3.05
Canada \$	2.615	2.427	3.19	2.95
Cyprus Cyp £	0.8684	0.7949	12.85	11.51
Denmark Kr	11.12	10.23	286.29	274.58
Egypt	5.21	5.20	10.27	9.31
Finland Mk	8.96	8.21	246.96	228.17
France Fr	9.75	8.97	13.82	12.72
Germany Dm	2.931	2.689	2.441	2.223
Greece Dr	498	447	543357	50722
Hong Kong \$	13.60	12.40	1.785	1.61
Iceland	127	107		
Indonesia	18810	11810		
Ireland P	1.189	1.087		
Israel Sh	7.06	6.46		
Italy Lit	2914	2671		

Rates for small denomination banknotes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to travellers' cheques. Rates as at close of trading yesterday.

## ANZ

### Base Rate

Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited announces that its base rate has changed from 6.25% to 6% p.a. with effect from close of business on 7th January 1999.

## Grindlays

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## Good News For NatWest Small Business Customers

Interest rates applicable to Business Overdraft Agreements, Business Loan Agreements\* and Flexible Business Loan Agreements\* are reduced by 1/4% per annum with effect from 8 January 1999.

\*This notice does not apply to agreements which specify the rate as fixed or linked to Base Rate.



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## Interest rate change

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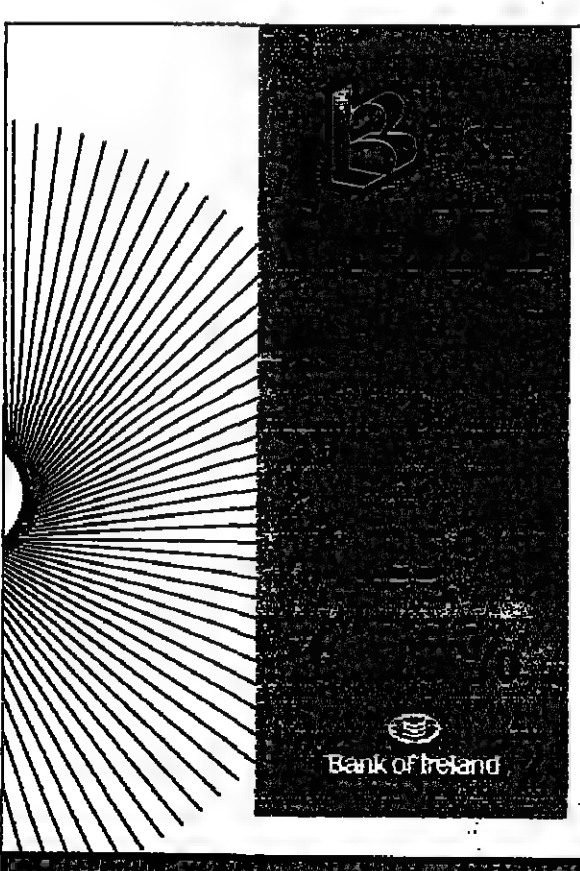
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## Barclays Base Rate Change

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Bank of Ireland



# Doves in full flight

COMMENTARY  
by our City Editor



The Monetary Policy Committee has been turned into a dove. Yesterday's cut in interest rates, although but a meagre quarter of a per cent, was the fourth in succession. It came despite some statistics which might have enabled any lingering hawks to argue in favour of a month of wait and see. But the fact is that even the most inflation-fearing of economists cannot now sniff out a whiff of that danger in the UK economy: the latest cut is evidence of the MPC's acknowledgement that recession looms.

The quarter per cent, and the prospect of a weaker pound which it should bring with it, will not be enough to silence the bearings of manufacturers. They fear that the money market is "enough", the MPC will expect that it has gone too far and take remedial action. Nonetheless, the rapid moves of the banking societies to cut their rates was greeted with glee and the suggestion that there might be a rapid transfer of that excitement to the high street stores.

Some hope. While almost 11 million mortgages affect the spending patterns of the nation, there are many more people who are lenders rather than borrowers. For the holders of the 40 million savings accounts in the country, another cut in interest rates is anything but good news.

For those whose lifestyle depends on income from their sav-

ings, a spot of retail therapy to brighten a gloomy January, for themselves and the struggling retailers, is now even less likely to figure on the agenda. The beneficiaries of higher interest rates tend to be ignored in the economic debate but the growing proportion of pensioners in the country adds to their numbers daily.

Many of the elderly who choose to put their money into the stock market instead of the building society are already seeing their spending power backed away. Before his untimely departure from the office of Paymaster General, Geoffrey Robinson, ruled that non-tax paying pensioners should no longer be able to claw back the advance corporation tax on their share dividends.

Those who benefit from multi-million off-shore trust funds do not need to worry about such sums but for pensioners on limited incomes, and without generous friends to loan them hundreds of thousands of pounds without worrying about the interest, the financial future is looking ever more bleak.

Withdrawing the tax concession was a mean move which, in Mr Robinson's absence, should be reconsidered. Not that sensi-

ble pensioners may want to risk their money in the stock market, anyhow. Yesterday's bout of profit-taking, reversing much of the previous day's gain, indicated just how wary investors are of the ability of share prices to continue to defy gravity.

As the MPC's decision implies, the world slowdown is inevitably affecting the UK. Falling corporate earnings will sooner or later have to be reflected in share prices.

## Working time rule can damage health

The Working Time Directive is one of those pieces of legislation whose full impact takes time to dawn. When this European brainwave was absorbed into UK law last year, the protests were fairly muted. Now, however, the huge costs inherent in its implementation are hitting home and they go well beyond the massive increase in form-fil-

ing that was one of the first consequences to be felt, often by small businesses which do not have the spare administrative capacity to cope with yet another bureaucratic demand. Government pledges to cut red tape have been buried under the sheaves of extra paperwork that the Directive is forcing onto companies.

But the extra burden falls not merely on the commercial sector. As Frank Dobson tries to persuade us that the current crisis in the National Health Service is all the fault of Sydney Hui, the Directive is actually wreaking havoc on the already over-stretched finances of the NHS.

The obligation to provide agency workers with virtually all the benefits of being full-time employees has disastrous implications for the Health Service. Private nursing homes are finding that the costs of hiring agency nurses are close to doubling, in some cases, because of the increased obligations to provide

for them. The shortage of nurses in the NHS already drives it to use more and more agency staff — at least one in eight nurses in NHS trusts is now likely to come through an agency. What the Working Time Directive does is make it increasingly attractive for nurses to opt for the flexibility of working through an agency rather than for an NHS trust.

The wage bill is, therefore, set to run up even further. While some hospitals aim to solve the problem by flying in contingents of eager Philipinos desperate to hit the wards, over all Mr Dobson seems to have no choice but to accept that the NHS will be employing more and more nurses through private sector agencies. Yet in other areas, he seems keen to cut back on co-operation between the public and the private sector in matters of health. The drive to cut waiting lists might have been accomplished even faster had the NHS been prepared to sub-contract

more simple operations to efficient private hospitals.

This is just one of the areas which the Select Committee on Health might probe as it studies the submissions, due in by next Friday, from the private sector. More cooperation rather than less should be the aim.

## No one left to carry the can

Doctors bury their mistakes, bankers merely leave them behind when they move to another job. It is no good blaming the current regime at Barclays, or even the recently departed Martin Taylor, for the errors that led it to pay out £16 million to the administrators of British & Commonwealth. The head of Barclays in those days, Sir John Quinlan, now heads the FA Premier League, while the then head of BZW, Sir Martin Jacob, is chairman of the Pru and the merchant banker who advised B&C to buy Atlantic, Richard Heley, is now at Charterhouse. So Barclays ends up out of pocket with no one to carry the can.

John Gunn knows who to blame, though. The B&C boss

points out that now Barclays and co have settled with the administrators, all the secured creditors will get back 100p in the pound, while unsecured creditors will get at least 85p. Given the displacement that always happens during administration, this indicates that B&C may have been solvent, even after writing off its losses on Atlantic.

Gunn has long maintained that Midland Bank pulled the plug on B&C in order to try and stop the legal action against its merchant banking arm, Samuel Montagu, over the Quadrex débacle. If so, the strategy failed, as the administrators carried on suing and ultimately won £172 million from HSBC, by then owner of Midland. Naturally, Sir Kit McMahon, Midland's boss in those days, has long moved on.

## Bug worries

WITH less than a year to go, the British Bankers' Association has come to the view that business is not taking the prospective bite of the millennium bug seriously enough. Its message is that fears over cost should not deter companies from taking steps to ward off the potential problem, although there are no promises of preferential borrowing rates for those with bug problems. Wary businesses may suspect that owing up to their bug difficulties will result not in sympathy but a withdrawal of all credit.

## Digital television forecast

More than 5.6 million homes in the UK will have digital satellite television by 2008, according to Baskerville Communications, the international market information group. The company, which is based in California, believes that the UK will have the highest penetration of digital satellite in the world by 2008 and by then will be generating revenues of \$4 billion (£2.4 billion) a year. By then the company expects 45.8 per cent of UK homes to have multi-channel television.

The UK forecasts are part of an international study, Global Digital Satellite TV, Baskerville predicts that digital satellite will show rapid growth over the next decade and will rise from 16.8 million to 61 million worldwide by 2008. Total revenues are forecast to hit \$38.6 billion a year. The US is expected to account for more than 28 per cent of the total.

## Peptide positive

Peptide Therapeutics, the vaccine company that needs to raise new money to finance its proposed £9 million acquisition of OraVax, announced positive results from phase II studies of its typhoid vaccine and its hayfever treatment. John Brown, chief executive, said the oral typhoid vaccine results were "all we could have hoped for". However, the hayfever treatment, under option to SmithKline Beecham, was only effective for severe sufferers.

Shire's early start  
Shire Pharmaceuticals is to make an early start on phase III trials of its treatment for high blood phosphate levels after a positive interim analysis of a phase II study. However, the application for US marketing approval for Abtacin, its treatment for Alzheimer's disease, has been delayed to allow time to assemble a comprehensive filing dossier.

# Gent stays away as MCI WorldCom enters the fray

CHRIS GENT, chief executive of Vodafone, is refusing to shorten his holiday in the antipodes despite fears yesterday that the mobile phone group's attempt to walk off with the US operator AirTouch looks set to be hijacked by a counter offer from MCI WorldCom.

The emergence of interest from MCI WorldCom means that AirTouch is now being pursued by three suitors having initially been close to concluding an agreement with Bell Atlantic. That number could rise to four as Wall Street is now also awaiting an offer for AirTouch from Mannesmann, the expanding German media group. Bernie Ebbers, chief executive of MCI WorldCom and the man who broke up British Telecom's attempts to buy MCI two years ago, is said to have held meetings with advisers and bankers. Jack Grubman, the analyst at Salomon Smith Barney, who is close to Mr Ebbers, has raised his target price for AirTouch to \$60 billion (£36 billion).

Mr Gent is understood to have dispatched Ken Hydon,



Mr Ebbers raised target price

is on safari. He's in contact. It's a situation he's been close to for the past 18 months, and there is game-plan in place. There's nothing he can do at this stage that the team can't. Vodafone has not ruled out raising its bid, said by some to be as much as \$55 million, while Bell Atlantic is thought to be unwilling to go much beyond the \$45 billion it has already offered.

One Vodafone source, however, said: "There is a price at which we will walk away."

With the entry of Mr Ebbers, the scene is now set for a protracted bid battle.

Mr Ebbers is one of corporate America's most experienced artists in the takeover arena having prior to the MCI deal built up WorldCom through some 50 acquisitions. Mr Ebbers is seen by some as acting now toward AirTouch in much the same fashion as when he trumped BT in its \$40 million takeover of MCI.

The move, however, stunned some analysts who said that he had previously stated that he had no interest in buying a mobile phone company.

One company source said: "It's not as though [Mr Gent]

## Strong trading for niche duo

By SARAH CUNNINGHAM, RETAIL CORRESPONDENT

TWO niche retailers, Clinton Cards and Electronics Boutique, reported strong Christmas trading yesterday.

Clinton Cards said it had enjoyed strong growth in sales over the festive season as cards remained a popular purchase with otherwise cautious shoppers. Like-for-like sales at the stores in the five weeks to January 3 rose 11.4 per cent, while total sales from Clinton's 518 shops was up 22.9 per cent. The group was vague

about trading at the 206 Greetings Store Group shops it took over last October, saying only that sales were "in line with the board's expectations". It said it will spend this year improving the layout of these shops and their stock ranges.

Electronics Boutique, which specialises in computer software and video games, said that its like-for-like sales rose 11 per cent, with total sales up 31 per cent on last year in the five weeks to January 2.

John Steinbrecher, chief executive, said that Sony PlayStation consoles had sold well, as had the *Fifa 99*, *Tomb Raider 3* and *Legend of Zelda* software titles.

## Sims chief shuts down own office

THE chief executive of Sims Food, the supplier of burgers to Burger King, has effectively put himself out of work by deciding to close the company's head office (Sarah Cunningham writes).

Stephen Collier, brought in to run the company in 1995 after it was nearly sunk by the BSE crisis, said that the closure of the Milton Keynes office would save more than £500,000 a year. It will cost £300,000. Mr Collier also said that annual pre-tax profits will "substantially exceed market expectations".

Mr Collier will look for a new job when he leaves Sims at the end of March. The work done in Milton Keynes will be transferred to the factory in Hull, where Paul Harrison will become managing director.

## Texaco to cut spending

TEXACO, the American oil company with significant interests in the North Sea, is to reduce capital spending in 1999 by \$600 million (£364 million) to \$3.7 billion from a planned \$4.3 billion and accelerate a \$650 million cost-cutting programme as a result of continued weak oil prices.

Peter Bijur, chairman and chief executive officer, said: "Given this period of low energy prices, our revised spending plan, together with our cost and expense reduction programme, are appropriate actions."

# UK businesses will suffer in wake of new currency

By SAIED SHAH

UK companies are less prepared for the euro than their continental counterparts and will suffer as a result, according to a survey of UK and European equity analysts.

The study, by Deloitte Consulting, found that 43 per cent of UK analysts think companies in their sector do not have a clear view of how the euro will affect their business, compared with 27 per cent of European analysts.

Hans Christian Iversen, a partner at Deloitte, said: "UK companies especially have no

plan and no allocated resources for adapting to the euro and are waiting for a government decision to join before they act. "Unfortunately, UK companies cannot avoid the issue. Analysts are already factoring in the implications of the euro on their ratings of sectors and individual companies."

More than two thirds of UK analysts said companies in their sector had not made them explicitly aware of their euro strategies, compared with a third of European analysts.

The biggest area of concern for analysts is that companies have not resolved the pricing implications of the euro and, for UK analysts, the IT requirements of the euro.

In the short term, 85 per cent of both sets of analysts believe the euro will involve substantial costs to companies and 78 per cent think that margins will be damaged. However, in the medium term, 79 per cent of all analysts believe the euro will have a positive impact on the European business environment.

With effect from the start of business on Friday 8th January 1999 and until further notice, TSB Base Rate is decreased from 6.25% p.a. to 6.00% p.a.

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## Base Rate

Bank of Scotland announces that with effect from Thursday 7th January 1999 its Base Rate has been decreased from 6.25% per annum to 6.00% per annum.

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The change in Base Rate will also be applied from the same date by Lloyds Private Banking Limited.

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Lloyds Bank Plc, 71 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BS

## NatWest Business Deposit Interest Rates

NatWest announces the following interest rates, effective from 8 January 1999:

Solicitors' Reserve Accounts					
Current Rate (per annum %)	APR (%)	Balance	Next Group Rate (per annum %)	Next APR (%)	
4.45	4.52	Instant access - interest paid quarterly	4.20	4.27	
4.40	4.47	£100,000 - £249,999	4.15	4.22	
4.00	4.06	£25,000 - £99,999	3.75	3.80	
3.50	3.55	£2,000 - £24,999	3.25	3.29	
3.00	3.03	£500 - £1,999	2.75	2.78	
1.75	1.76	£0 - £499	1.50	1.51	

Where appropriate, you will be deducted at source from interest credited or paid. The Annual Equivalent Rate (AER) is a national rate which shows the gross interest rate as if paid and compounded on an annual basis.



National Westminster Bank Plc, 41 Lombard Street, London EC3P 3BP

## Informative:

### First Direct Base Rate

With effect from 7 January 1999, First Direct Base Rate has been decreased by 0.25% from 6.25% p.a. to 6.00% p.a.

### HomeOwner Reserve

With effect from 7 January 1999, the HomeOwner Reserve interest rate has been decreased by 0.25% to 12.25% p.a. (APR 12.7%).

### Visa Card

With effect from 22 January 1999, the Visa Card interest rate will be reduced from 1.50% to 1.45% per month (APR 18.8%) for purchases and (APR 20.9%) for cash advances.

First Direct is a division of Midland Bank plc

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**MICHAEL CLARK**

[illegible]

هكذا من الإصم



## Mid-rank ministers are key to success

It is hard to remember in these post-Mandelson days that it was once the Department of Social Security that provided the Government with its biggest headache. Harriet Harman, the former Secretary of State for Social Security, quickly acquired a reputation as an ineffectual minister. Frank Field, the independent-minded MP brought in to "think the unthinkable" on pensions and welfare reform, was at constant loggerheads with the Treasury over his ideas. After a full year in Government, Labour had made no progress on fulfilling one of its main manifesto commitments, leaving the pensions and insurance industry complaining bitterly that the Government was going round in circles.

Last summer, the axe finally fell and Ms Harman and Mr Field became the highest-profile victims of Tony Blair's reshuffle. In stepped Alistair Darling, fresh from the Treasury. Progress started to be made and by December the long-awaited pensions reform Green Paper was published. The discussion document calls for the abolition of the state earnings-related pension and its replacement with a second state pension for the very low paid.

Middle earners are to be encouraged — but not compelled — to take out private provision while tax perks for upper earners have been left untouched.

So far, so good. The reform plans, while not quite living up to the hype of a radical overhaul of the pensions system, were relatively well received. Mr Darling was able to put the plans aside and turn his attention to the need to tackle the welfare reform.

Yet the Green Paper is far from the finished product. Senior ministers naturally want to reveal in the excitement of a new policy and then move on. Most of government, however, is the tedious job of turning these plans into legislative and executive reality. A failure to complete the details has damaging practical consequences for business and consumers, effectively introducing "policy blight" into the system. The very real long-term consequences of failing to turn broad-brush reforms into hard policy are likely to prove far more damaging than the fall-out from feuding spin-doctors.

The pensions reform plans are just such a case. The Green Paper indicates that smaller companies that do not offer company pension plans will have to provide access to stakeholder pensions. Employers will be landed with extra costs, but with no clear expression of how this proposal will work in practice, there is little they can do in the way of preparation.

The plans have had a negative impact on the pensions industry itself. The Government, by announcing the introduction

of high-standard stakeholder pensions, has made it extremely difficult to sell existing pensions. Not surprisingly, consumers are reluctant to rush into such a fundamental financial commitment when a greatly improved product may be available in the near future. At the same time, there has been insufficient guidance on the style of the new stakeholder pensions for the industry to begin the complex task of designing new products. The pension companies are especially taxed by the idea of a capped maximum charge rate. They argue it will hurt their bottom lines to such a degree



ALISTAIR DARLING

that the reform will prove counterproductive and force companies out of the middle earnings pension market.

It is not Alistair Darling, however, who has the vital task of resolving these problems but Stephen Timmins, the newly appointed Minister of State for Welfare Reform. The new Pensions Minister is hardly a household name. His previous claim to fame was winning the East Ham by-election in 1994 with a remarkable 75 per cent of the vote after his Liberal Democrat opponent defected to Labour on the eve of the poll.

A committed Christian, he was also an unusual target for attention in the wake of Derek Draper's fall from grace last year. His researcher may have connections with Whitefield Associates, a lobbying group, but offering advice to a variety of Christian groups is unlikely to result in a significant conflict of interest.

## Buffeted boat industry stays buoyant in face of stormy sea

UK builders are at full throttle to attract a new wave of buyers, says Kimberly McDonald

Pop stars do it. Footballers do it. Even the Prince of Wales tried it. Now the UK boatbuilding industry is following suit and undergoing its own makeover attempt.

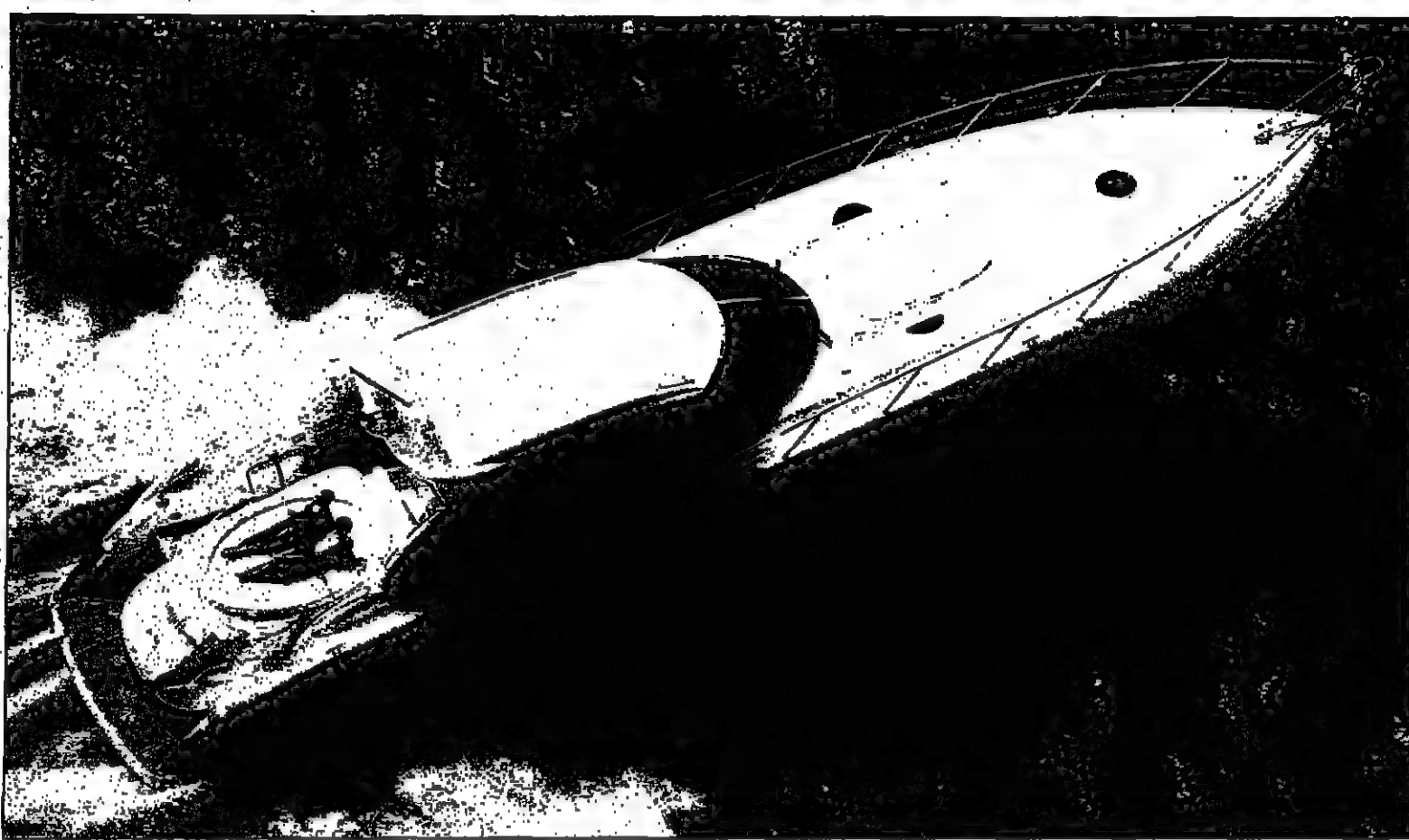
Once a highly coveted symbol of wealth and glamour, boating began to nose-dive a few years ago. Women didn't want to know about boats and young people shied away from a pastime with an image suggesting gin and tonics and /3 DROP/Howards' Way. Last year, the British Marine Industries Federation (BMIF) listed 180 pastimes, from parasailing to Zen Buddhism, to which boating was losing ground.

The high pound during 1998 caused a serious blow to exports and the business equipment suppliers was extreme pessimism.

The tone at this year's London International Boat Show, which opened at ExCel Centre yesterday, is notably more optimistic. The pound has retreated to more reasonable levels, prompting an increase in sales. Last September was a turning-point for the industry, and sales last year picked up 10 per cent higher in the latter part of 1998 compared to early 1998.

Boating equipment sales, which declined 14 per cent in 1997, have increased in the second half of 1998. That has done much to spur optimism in the UK industry, despite an expected economic slowdown.

In its latest biannual industry trends survey, the BMIF, which organises the London Boat Show, reports that its members, whilst being prepared for a drop in consumer confidence and spending, are more optimistic about the market as a whole than they were in the previous six months, with exporters being particularly upbeat about the future. The UK's big powerboat manufacturers, such as



Pull steam ahead: the UK industry is targeting first-time buyers with entry-level boats to complement sales of vessels such as this Sunseeker Predator 63

Fairline, Princess and Sunseeker, seem to be holding on to their European sales.

But the industry still faces many challenges. Topper International, one of the best known names in British yachting, and Victoria Yacht, had to withdraw from the Boat Show because of financial difficulties. Despite being a regular fixture at the show, Topper's continuing financial troubles and the company's voluntary arrangement with creditors to avoid receivership, prevented its participation this year.

While boat builders take some solace in the home market, the high pound is still hurting profits at the main British exporters, who rely heavily on exports. The damage is twofold: making their products more expensive in overseas markets; and attracting cheap imports from Europe and the US to compete with them on home territory. The greatest competition comes from France, where well-made cheaper boats are becoming a force to be reckoned with.

"On a value basis, it's hard

for customers to ignore the sailboats from France," said Tony Beechey, executive chairman of BMIF. UK manufacturers also have little scope to lower prices.

"There is a strong element of realism that many companies, while continuing plans for capital expenditure and investment, expect to have to increase their prices in the next six months," Mr Beechey said.

In America, home of the world's biggest boat industry, sales have trailed off slightly. While recreational spending has grown by more than 50 per cent in seven years, boating's share has shrunk from 3.8 per cent to 2.1 per cent. A recent US report showed that, in 1994, owning a boat came sixth on a "wish list" of consumer preferences. Fourteen years later, it came 15th.

With domestic interest on the wane, US companies are intensifying their overseas focus, posing a serious competitive challenge for British builders, particularly in the sportsboat market. US sports boats are built in huge numbers, so quantity keeps prices down. These boats are not

only stylish but also cheaper, given the pound's current level, hurting Britain's main sports boat builders such as Fletcher and Shakespeare. Fighting competitive pricing is one thing.

Fighting old perceptions is another. Attendance at the Boat Show is expected to run at least 10 per cent above last year's level, but a survey of seven boat shows on three continents indicates a steady decline in interest. Over six years, more than 150,000 people decided to give their local show a miss.

In addition to changing perceptions, customer spending patterns have shifted as well. Boat designs have become standardised, allowing higher-volume production. Standardisation means that designs do not date so quickly and resale values remain high. So owners keep their boats longer, with more of them upgrading the kit and rigging of their craft.

For younger families, boating is far too time-consuming and expensive. Over 30 years, the price of a small cruiser has

risen by more than double the inflation rate. Scadgets, consequently, are getting older: 46 per cent of sailors and 35 per cent of motor boat users are aged over 55.

With these disheartening demographics as a backdrop, the BMIF launched its new Big Blue brand for all national boat shows. The "Big Blue Experience" makes its debut this year, and features a host of promotions, from fashion shows to watersports simulators, to create and attract a new generation of watersports enthusiasts.

Forget the image of stodgy seafarers, said Colin Campbell of Big Blue: "The Experience will be run by enthusiastic young boaters whose aim is to prove that boating has something to offer people of all ages."

The industry is changing the way it does business, focusing more sharply on the customers' needs and individualised service.

Doing whatever it takes to retain customers and interest is crucial for the boating industry, which cannot afford to lose its loyal UK customer base. Unlike

motorists, boat owners overwhelmingly buy British, with 85 per cent of new boats purchased from UK yards. While more than two thirds of boat sales are in the second-hand market, more people are being drawn into buying new as the supply of good quality second-hand craft starts to dry up. Builders are praying this trend continues.

Though the sign outside the BMIF reads "Wanted: Young People", it is the sophisticated Monte Carlo cruisers who have been the loyal buyers, not the more fickle younger generation. After all, with a top-of-the-range Sunseeker running at £2 million and even the more moderate flybridge cruisers from top builders such as Fairline, Marine Projects, and Sealine, costing upwards of £200,000, it's clear who the target audience is. But, there's a more concerted effort this year to attract first-time buyers with affordable good-value entry-level boats.

If value doesn't work, the BMIF is throwing in young models dancing under bright lights on a smoke-filled stage. Just in case.

## High-flyer brought down over Atlantic

Jason Nissé on John Gunn's efforts to keep his career afloat after the collapse of B&C

It is hardly much consolation. But more than ten years after making the decision that ruined his career, John Gunn believes he has proof that he was duped.

The former chairman of British & Commonwealth Holdings has long borne the responsibility for B&C's £408 million purchase of Atlantic Computers, the leasing group, in 1988. That deal led within two years to the £1.3 billion collapse of B&C, one of the largest financial disasters in British corporate history. This in turn led to a Department of Trade and Industry investigation, and an attempt to have Gunn struck off as a director, which led to a court case that Gunn, along with Rusty Ashman, B&C's finance director, and John Penny, Atlantic's sales director, won last June.

The settlement of the long-standing and complex legal action over the Atlantic deal lays the blame squarely at the feet of BZW (now Barclays Capital) and Coopers & Lybrand (now PricewaterhouseCoopers), which advised B&C, and Spicer & Oppenheim (now Deloitte & Touche) and NM Rothschild (which thankfully has not been bought, merged or changed its name). Atlantic's auditors and merchant bankers. Though they admit no liability in the settlement, Gunn argues that if these venerable City firms had not given Atlantic a clean bill of health in 1988 (when it was already becoming apparent that it was built on foundations of straw) B&C would never have bought it.

It also means that a large proportion of B&C creditors will be paid dividends of 100p in the pound, something that Gunn says proves his argument that B&C should never have been put into administration in the first place.

It is a rather pyrrhic victory for Gunn, who celebrates his 57th birthday next week. "My emotions are a bit

mixed," he said. "It's clear at the time the decision to pull the plug was a mistake. It has ruined a lot of shareholders and ruined a lot of people's lives."

Certainly Gunn's career was not helped. The son of the Cheshire railwayman worked his way up through the foreign exchange department of Barclays Bank and the world of moneybroking, and was a City high-flyer when the Atlantic deal was struck. He had left Exco, the moneybroker, in 1986 to take charge of B&C, which was then an investment vehicle for the Cayzer family. In just a few years he transformed it into the UK's largest financial services conglomerate. He earned nearly £1 million a year and purchased a huge home in Holland Park, known for its ballroom.

Gunn stayed with B&C for a year or so after its collapse, helping the administrators, Nigel Hamilton and Stephen Adamson, of Ernst & Young, to sell the main businesses, which included Garmore and Oppenheim & Co, the fund managers, Celltech, the biotechnology start-up, and Exco, Gunn's old business. Adamson has always been complimentary about Gunn, supporting him in his fight against the DTI and admitting that Ernst & Young advised the banks against pulling the plug on B&C.

Gunn has rebuilt his career after a fashion. Though the DTI action prevented him from joining the board of Chelsea Village, owner of the Premier League football club, subsequent events there have made this a blessing in disguise. He now runs a small merchant bank, but is not registered with the Securities & Futures Authority. Another case of regulators blaming him for B&C? No. "I just thought I was a bit old to take the exams," he said.

## Italian job

THE latest horse-trading in euroland looks set to put a Frenchman in charge of the powerful Economic and Finance Committee, which used to trade as the plain old Monetary Committee, to succeed Sir Nigel Wicks, Gordon Brown's main man in the EU. Wicks has stood down as chairman, and Jean Lemierre, a French Treasury civil servant, is expected to take over at this month's meeting.

This being the EU, the whole thing is the result of a shabby curve-up, inevitably. Mario Draghi, head of the Italian Treasury, was up for the job, but the rumour is that he has decided to withdraw in return for French support for an Italian in an even bigger EU post.

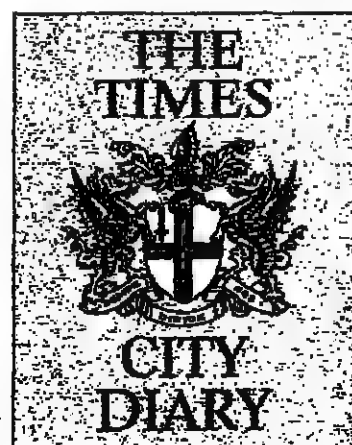
Jacques Santer may stand down this year as head of the Commission, and the man with his eye on this job is Romano Prodi, former Italian Prime Minister. The Italians rather hope the French can deliver the job. If Lemierre gets to take over this would be some consolation for the failure of Jean-Claude Trichet to take over the European Central Bank, my source says. The incumbent president, Wim Duisenberg, recently refused to go early, you may recall.

I am told, however, that Trichet was never in the running. The talk is that the Governor of the Bank of France is too heavily implicated in the collapse of the Crédit Lyonnais bank, so all the fuss over him succeeding Duisenberg was a smoke-screen.

What a shower.

BAD luck to Stephen Adamson, corporate recovery guru at Ernst & Young, who for five years has pursued those responsible for the collapse of British & Commonwealth on behalf of the creditors. The final settlement with Barclays Bank and the rest was at last announced yesterday, and he was in Thailand.

Sunning himself on the beach?



Alas, not Adamson has been charged with clearing up after the collapse of the state-owned timber corporation.

### Mapped out

AS ONE who shares his passion for maps, I can only admire the 20 years of effort by Philip Wood, head of the banking department at City lawyers Allen & Overy, that went into *Maps of World Financial Law*, a slim but colourful volume that shows how the 300 or more jurisdictions around the globe view various transactions.

The 21 maps are in full colour and are clearly a labour of love — Wood says he enjoyed the colouring in, even if this was achieved by computer rather than crayon. "For people who are trying to do deals worldwide, it's a nightmare," he says.

He is particularly proud of Map 21, on global netting, which shows your chances of recovering a debt against a matching liability in various countries, the product of two decades of globe-trotting research. Memo: avoid the Middle East, Africa and Latin America.

### Drug-crazed

MOST pharmaceutical research notes might as well be written in Estonian as far as I am concerned. So I felt a twinge of sympathy for whoever was responsible for Shire Pharmaceuticals' update on its treatment for high phosphate levels in the blood.

Some sort of computer glitch meant that the research team's notes were garbled and then squashed down the line instead of the finished version. "Compare to normal levels of phosphate found in the blood?" it says at one point, along with various other esoteric stage directions.

I ask if the finished version made any more sense. "Probably," comes the answer. "Almost definitely."

THE clock is ticking for the Heathrow 60 plus guinea pig. Mario Avagliano pleaded guilty to importing the beast and to charges of cruelty to animals yesterday and was jailed for six weeks and fined £1,000. Readers of yesterday's column will know that the animals are at the Corporation of London's reception centre at Heathrow, waiting to serve six months in quarantine.

The end of the trial now means they

can be destroyed in eight days' time because they have already been behind bars for a week. Something must be done, and quick.

### Money talks

I HAVE been sent a copy of the latest new year's card from the Association of French Banks to their members. It celebrates the birth of the euro with a map of Europe that features a sheaf of the new banknotes obliterating most of La Belle France. Furthermore, they have used an old map that refers to their German partners, rather militarily, you might think, as Prussia. What are they trying to say?

MARTIN WALLER



Bismarck: fondly remembered. It seems, by the French banks

## Coutts & Co Base Rate

With effect from Thursday 7 January 1999  
Coutts & Co's Base Rate changed from 6.25% to 6.00% p.a.

Coutts & Co's Mortgage Reserve Account Managed Borrowing Rate also changed from 7.70% to 7.45% p.a.



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# EDUCATION

The Prime Minister's children are slipping back to school after the term has started, as are those of several government officials, even after pleas from David Blunkett for parents to refrain from taking holidays during term-time.

According to John McIntosh, headmaster of the London Oratory School where Euan and Nicky Blair are pupils, children should not miss out on vital lessons to fit in with their parents' plans.

Reasonable parents who show commitment to their offspring's school and who pitch up to the fêtes, the carol services and speech days must be wondering who their children belong to. Can any of us really say that the odd day out of the classroom has stunted our personalities or our careers?

What Mr Blunkett may have failed to recognise is that it is more often out of necessity rather than in defiance of school rules that parents choose to take their children away. How often do employers dictate when annual leave can be taken? Should an entire family miss out on a break if working parents have been allocated holidays during May, June or September? Cheaper fares and hotel accommodation spring up "out of season" and travelling abroad is prohibitively expensive when school is out.

Call me an irresponsible parent, but this summer I am taking my seven, nine and ten-year-old out of primary school to Malta for one week. They may miss out on seven days of desk-bound academic work but I envisage that in that time they will get the chance to embrace a variety of experiences that will enrich their general understanding of the world. And all without realising that they have been working.

**ENGLISH:** This will be wide-ranging in its approach. Daily diaries will be kept, postcards written, books read and discussed around the swimming pool and the dining table.



Prime target: Tony and Cherie Blair came under fire from educationists and the press when their last holiday ran over into term-time

## School takes a holiday

Time spent away from the classroom can be a lesson in life, argues Margaret Mead

**LANGUAGES:** Arabic will be a cross-curriculum language. The opportunity to experience this is not easily found. Interest in French, German and Italian is all stimulated by meeting and talking to children from other countries. And pen friends are created in this way.

**MATHEMATICS:** Each child will have some cash and will need to understand the difference in currencies. Exchange rates will help with multiplication tables: it is not difficult to boost children's interest in maths when they are surrounded by enticing objects in a shop.

**SCIENCE:** Observation of flora and fauna in their natural habitat is always interesting. Sound and light will be well demonstrated in Malta, courtesy of fireworks displays. We will also conduct a scientific investigation of

mosquitoes, devising ways to prevent bites. For recreation, perhaps during breakfast, we will watch the Discovery television channel, which provides excellent footage of the natural world. We will be swimming and snorkelling off the coast to enable study of the Mediterranean habitat (also part of our physical education programme).

**DESIGN TECHNOLOGY:** This will involve looking at aircraft design. The building of sandcastles will also be used to study design and to assess the need for moist sand as a building requirement. The "design-a-sandwich" concept comes alive when the children help to make their meals or choose food from a salad bar.

**HISTORY:** Malta's origins are fascinating and the island is rich in historical sites. We can study this history from the Stone Age tracks and the Knights Templars to Malta's role in the Second World War, and link it to European history as a whole. A morning in the dungeons of Mdina will have many implications, not merely from a historical perspective.

**GEOGRAPHY:** From the moment the aircraft takes off, we will be studying geography — mountains, volcanoes, rivers, seas and land. Clouds will be observed during the flight. There will also be many opportunities to study erosion and how the sea affects the land. Land usage will be studied, as will

weather systems and the docks in the capital, Valletta.

**RELIGIOUS STUDIES:** Malta is Roman Catholic. St Paul was shipwrecked here, which will provide the impetus to examine the New Testament, and to visit some of the fine churches.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION:** Swimming can provide a novel approach to play and it increases a child's confidence in, and enjoyment of, the water. It will be a good opportunity to hit a tennis ball on real courts and play football, which transcends all cultural barriers and can be enjoyed anywhere.

**ART:** The children will have sketchbooks for drawing

and will take photographs. They will be able to see works of art within an historical context. Wet sand will be used to sculpt figures.

**PERSONAL AND SOCIAL EDUCATION:** The value, emotionally, of spending quality time with parents who are often busy at home cannot be overemphasised. Experiencing life away from home and school, and the chance to observe the conduct expected of them in society, can help children to mature socially. Children learn through talking, which cannot always be encouraged in a class of 30 pupils. In a family environment, on holiday, they have many things to observe and discuss.

The issue for head teachers is whether the system of record-keeping that counts these holidays as truancy is worth upholding.

## When a chief inspector calls

School inspections are popular and invaluable or reviled and ineffective, depending on which surveys you read. Two diametrically opposite views emerged on successive mornings earlier this week and yesterday we were treated to the "independent" evaluation. Head teachers, governors and parents have all had their say. Even the children have been polled.

The National Union of Teachers was first out of the blocks: A survey of more than 1,200 head teachers or deputies — all NUT members — overwhelmingly condemned the Ofsted system as wasteful and demoralising. One head said it was "possibly the most intimidating experience of my life", another that any benefits were wiped out by the consequent illness among his staff.

Chris Woodhead, the senior chief inspector, dismissed the survey as "seriously flawed" — it was, after all, a self-selecting sample, albeit a large one of NUT members. He presented Ofsted's own findings, produced from a MORI telephone poll of primary school heads and governors. This survey, of almost identical size to the NUT's, found that four out of five schools were satisfied with the way their inspection had been conducted and almost as many thought the recommendations for action provided a basis for future development.

This time it was the turn of Doug McAvoy, the NUT's general secretary, to criticise the methodology, claiming that the wrong questions had been asked. Nigel de Gruchy, his opposite number at the National

Association of School Masters and Union of Women Teachers, noted that the satisfaction level coincided with the proportion of schools judged not to have serious weaknesses. Mr Woodhead said that the MORI poll confirmed his impressions, gained on numerous school visits. The demonstration of Ofsted was down to the unions and a tiny minority with access to the columns of the educational press.

Having experienced two inspections as a governor, I have been struck by their approach, one apparently determined to find fault, the other to celebrate success. The contrast may make a crucial difference to the performance of nervous teachers. The point is highlighted in yesterday's report by the Helix Consulting Group and Brunel University's centre for public policy and practice.

Mr Woodhead would be less than human if he did not question the independence of a report commissioned by the self-styled Office for Standards in Inspection, a body born out of dissatisfaction with Ofsted. But he might be surprised by many of its conclusions. It is acknowledged, for example, that although teachers remain suspicious, governors and parents generally accept the validity of findings.

Indeed, even the NUT poll shows a minority questioning the fairness of reports, most of which are perceived to tell schools what they already know. But there lies the longer-term debate over Ofsted's future: if most reports were accurate first time round and standards are improving, is it worth repeating the process again and again?

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# Teachers who train must try harder

Trainees are being cheated by tutors, argues Elizabeth Kelly

The new year has opened, with claims that the shortage of teachers is becoming more critical. One of the reasons for this is that some teachers prefer life away from the school classroom. Why is this?

I qualified as a secondary school English teacher in 1996. I took the course at a top university department of education which has now received a clean bill of health from Ofsted. About half my training took place in schools, where I was under the supervision of expert practising teachers. The rest of my time was spent at university, under the dubious guidance of the English faculty.

I came across dedicated staff, but the faculty mostly consisted of disillusioned former teachers. Responsible for turning out a new generation of English teachers, they were role models with a duty to encourage and inspire. Sadly, it appeared that they had opted for teacher training not so much from a passion for their profession but as a desire to escape from it.

Despite regular school visits and bouts of teaching, the faculty staff seemed out of touch with the problems facing trainees. I began my Postgraduate Certificate in Education at a time when fundamental elements of education were in a state of upheaval. Yet instead of confronting these issues, the staff either evaded or ridiculed them. Sneering at the national curriculum, and at the Conservative Government, which

had introduced it, was one of the faculty's favourite pastimes.

Discipline — one of a trainee's most pressing concerns — was considered a dirty word. However, a teacher cannot teach unless a class is orderly. When we asked for advice on how to deal with unruly students, we were fobbed off with the advice "avoid confrontation". We were expected to accommodate indiscipline, rather than to impose discipline.

In refusing to acknowledge the real pressures placed on trainees, the staff failed to meet our needs. Similarly, I believe that the course failed to attend to the needs of the children we were being trained to teach.

While the course syllabus appeared to address the needs of the national curriculum, our training was subject to the whims and personal opinions of the staff. The faculty promoted a liberal, non-competitive system of education that prized creativity far above essential writing skills. The fact that such a view is at odds with the English curriculum and the demands of the real world did not bother them. The obligation to prepare students for the workplace was resented.

The English curriculum highlights the importance of grammar and punctuation in enabling students to communicate effectively. But the faculty dismissed the teaching of these elements as tedious and unnecessary. Overt instruction was actually considered harmful. Many of my fellow



Rules made to be broken: some teacher-trainers consider discipline a dirty word yet teachers must learn to impose it

students were easily influenced on this matter. One, posted to a particularly tough comprehensive, remarked that she really could see no point in teaching punctuation. If her students learnt to express themselves, that was enough.

I found this attitude alarming. What right did we have to deprive any student of basic writing skills? And how were we helping students to express themselves if we denied them access to the intrinsic tools of self-expression? As well as being defeatist, such low aspirations, I thought, harmful to their job prospects.

Not only did the faculty promote a veto on the teaching of grammar and punctuation, it tried to shift the responsibility to other departments. History and even science teachers, ar-

gued one tutor, all had a duty to help to improve student literacy. This would release overburdened English teachers to address neglected topics, such as media.

The fact that media study, as yet, plays a minor role in the English curriculum, did not deter our tutors from plugging it continually. Days were set aside for its consideration. In contrast, grammar and punctuation scarcely commanded a single seminar.

Media, it was argued, were not only more accessible than much of the "classic" literature set for study, but also more relevant. According to one tutor, television's *EastEnders* was of greater relevance to the lives of most students than Shakespeare. Why then should he take precedence?

Central to the faculty's philosophy was the concept of "social justice in education". Issues of social justice were, however, often promoted at the expense of education, defeating the purpose of our training. Media seminars were manipulated as a vehicle for airing political views.

The faculty was hostile to convention and tradition. Established and often highly effective teaching methods were rejected in favour of a progressive approach called differentiation. This required the teacher to replace whole-class teaching with group tasks, adapted to the abilities of the students.

Although attractive in theory, differentiation was inefficient and frustrating in practice. It virtually disempowered the teacher, who could do little more than assist while students muddled through their assignments. I enrolled on my course because I wanted to teach, not merely facilitate. I set out hoping to be enlightened; I left disenchanted.

Teacher-trainers occupy a privileged position. They are unburdened by the daily pressures of the classroom, and so they have the power to influence the course of education. The quality of their instruction is crucial in encouraging teachers to stay in the profession. Trainees have every right to question government policy, but they also have a duty to provide constructive, impartial guidance and a worthwhile course that prepares trainees for the real demands of teaching.

## Finding jobs for the independent boys and girls

Public schools need advice on careers too, says Bruce Kemble

For the past decade, Graham Searle has helped thousands of independent pupils with their most crucial decision when they leave the schoolroom — choosing a career.

Mr Searle has been the national director of the Independent School Careers Organisation (Isco), based at Camberley in Surrey, which was set up by the Headmaster's Conference at the start of the Second World War. Heads felt that boys needed help getting jobs. "It was just boys in those days," he says. "But now we advise as many, if not more, girls."

It may seem incongruous to give careers advice to pupils from the ancient public schools who clearly have a head start when it comes to networking. "I doubt whether this was ever true," he says. "But it is even less true today than it was then. However, to suggest that anyone is bound to get a job simply because they have been to an independent school is no longer the case. Firms are looking for people who can do the job, not where they came from."

Mr Searle, 60, who retired in September, organised 13,000 aptitude tests a year for 15 to 16-year-olds and interviews with about 7,000. Isco staff go over the results to help pupils in their A-level choices or they help sixth-formers to choose a university. Although 95 per cent of Isco candidates go on to higher education, the remainder receive careers advice when they go straight from school to work.

Mr Searle says: "There have always been a few firms, such as Marks & Spencer, that take people with only A levels, but the run-of-the-mill leavers from an independent school still want to go to university." Isco lays on about 150 courses a year that show teenagers what a job involves, ranging from hotel management at the Savoy to nursery nursing at Norton and horse-racing management at Goodwood. The closing date for applications for most of the Easter courses is Friday, January 22.

Mr Searle has noticed that an increasing number of firms refuse to recruit anyone who does not have a degree. "If you are going to read a straight academic subject, the best place for you is a traditional university with high standards; remembering that Warwick and York are as difficult to get into as Oxford or Cambridge."

"If you are looking for something vocational, there are many places that will be exactly what your employer is looking for. For example, Marks & Spencer will look at someone with a vocational degree in retail selling from Bournemouth or Manchester Metropolitan."

On the key question of how to choose your university, he is very clear. "You can do a lot of the preliminaries without visiting anywhere at all. One of the key factors is what grades you are likely to get. You can apply to six universities, but it would be optimistic to think that you would visit them all. I do not think you should accept an offer from a university you have not visited. That would be very silly."



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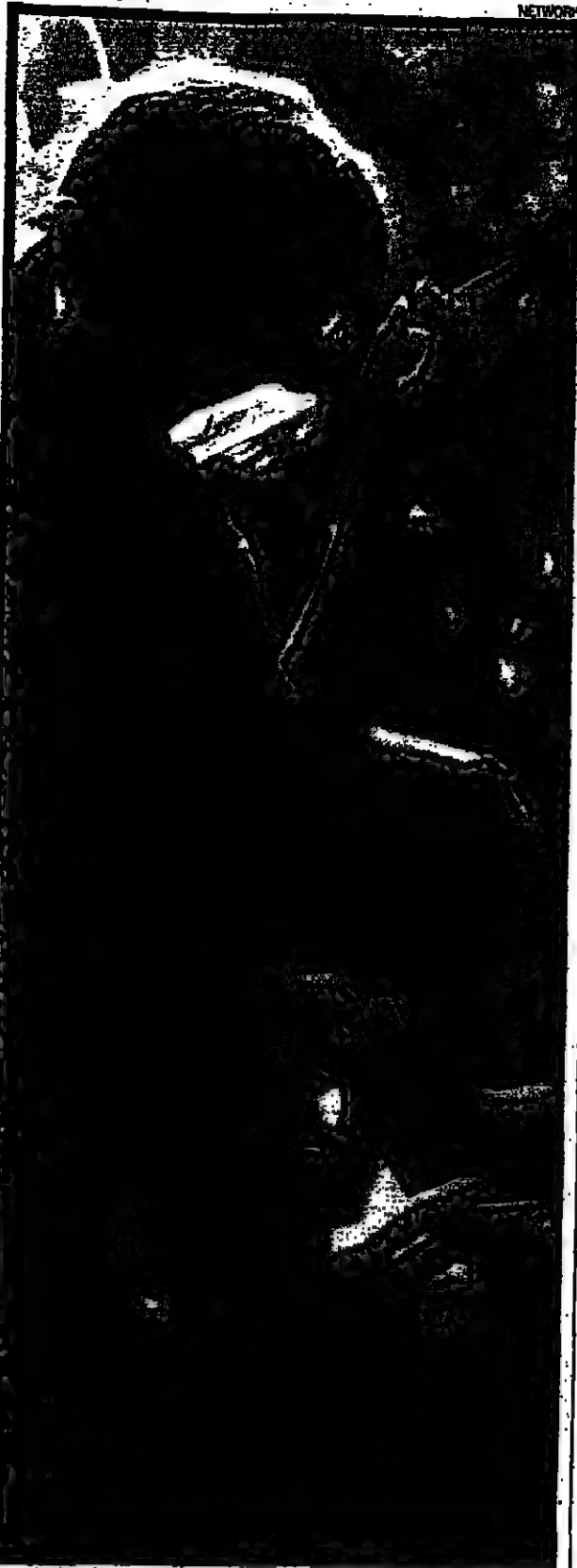
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# Please sir, stub your cigarette out



Smog alert: staffrooms are often thick with tobacco fumes

I cannot say that I have a particularly well-developed sense of smell, but whenever I venture into a school I have not visited before, it is smell that leads me to the staffroom. For, with very few exceptions, staffrooms are surrounded by dense fumes.

It may come as a surprise to many people, but schools are among the few public workplaces that still allow smoking. Most local councils have a no-smoking policy for all premises other than schools.

So why have schools escaped the smoking ban that almost every other institution has introduced? The answer may be related to the amount of stress under which teachers find themselves. Teaching is near the top of the list of professions whose members have the shortest life expectancy after retirement.

I know that being a teacher is very stressful. But smoking is a potential killer — not only for the smoker but for those who inhale the smoke. Puffing in the staffroom also tends to encourage non-smokers to take up the habit, sometimes almost in self-defence. Many teachers who enter the profession as "part-time" smokers soon become fully fledged members of the smoking fraternity.

Nevertheless, many teachers are unhappy about the amount of smoking that takes place in the staffroom because, of course, smoke affects everyone. If I had been given £1 by each

**Why have school staffrooms escaped the ban on smoking in public workplaces, asks Richard Evans**

teacher who told me that he or she objected to staffrooms being taken over by smokers, I would be a rich teacher (and there are not many of those around).

When I mentioned to colleagues that I was planning to write an article against smoking, they welcomed the idea. Non-smokers were pleased because they have long objected to, but could do nothing about, the smoke-filled staffroom. Several smokers pointed out that they were trying to give up but that, as teachers, it was almost impossible not to smoke with others lighting up around them. They felt that this pressure might just make a difference.

It must also be remembered that teachers are not the only people involved. Children are normally banned from the staffroom but they are aware of the smell of smoke es-

caping into the corridors. In this way, they are introduced to a duplicitous philosophy of "do as I say, not as I do". It is illegal to place cigarette advertisements near schools because of the influence that they can exert on young minds — surely a teacher who smokes is an even greater influence. Teachers are role models and can either encourage their students to smoke or, indeed, prevent them from taking up this deadly habit.

The decision on whether or not smoking can take place on school premises must be taken out of the control of the school or local education authority. It should be banned by the Government.

This is the way forward for healthier future generations of students and teachers. It may also have the more mundane advantage of preventing legal action from staff or students suffering from smoking-related diseases, as has happened in the United States.

I met the entertainer Roy Castle shortly before he died of cancer. It is well known that he had never touched a cigarette but had regularly performed in the smoky atmosphere of clubs. At the time nobody complained, either because they were not aware of the dangers or because it would have seemed rather pathetic. However, today the mood has changed and we now know the risks that smoking entails.



Don't do as I say, do as I do: children may copy their teachers

## Learning need not be confined to the city

**A community university benefits rural students, says Iola Smith**

Many adults who missed the opportunity to try higher education in their teens prefer to ease themselves into degree-level study with a part-time course. There is no shortage of opportunities for people in large conurbations, where most of the new universities are located. But in rural areas suitable courses inevitably are thinner on the ground.

A new scheme in North Wales, which could be a model for other parts of Britain, gives mature students from rural areas that opportunity. Bangor University has established the Community University of North Wales, offering introductory courses at further education (FE) colleges throughout the region.

Professor Roy Evans, Bangor's Vice-Chancellor, says: "There are many people in the region who, for various reasons — geographic, linguistic, domestic or financial — have never had the opportunity to improve their skills and qualifications. The community university will enable them to do so in their own locality."

Other universities offer franchised courses, but this initiative is different because it involves an agreement between all the region's FE colleges and its two higher education institutions, Bangor University and the North East Wales Institute (New).

Potential undergraduates will build up credits at their local college, which will count towards a degree. They will then be able to transfer to Bangor or the institute. There is no guaranteed university place, but if they are committed and hardworking they can build up the requisite number of credits.

Already 70 courses taught in eight FE colleges have been designated as community university path-

way courses. They include, for example, a Higher National Diploma course at Llysoesi Agricultural College in Ruthin. Students can transfer to an agriculture degree course at Bangor. Similarly, part-time students studying for the college's forestry certificate can benefit by switching on completion to Bangor's forest science degree course.

Physical transfer between institutions is not essential, however. The community university is seeking ways of teaching entire degree courses in colleges. New has begun by offering its BA design course as a part-time option at Menai FE College in Bangor.

"By taking the FE route we are able to use credits and modules to break down barriers," says David Roberts, chairman of the community university initiative and Bangor's academic registrar. "Students can progress from NVQ level through BTEC to a degree."

"But that is only the first stage. We envisage that by applying the Internet and distance learning, students will be able to study at home or in the workplace. We are investing £100,000 this year on exploring these options. And we have earmarked four curriculum areas — business management, media studies, community studies and engineering — as pilots for developing and testing new teaching methods."

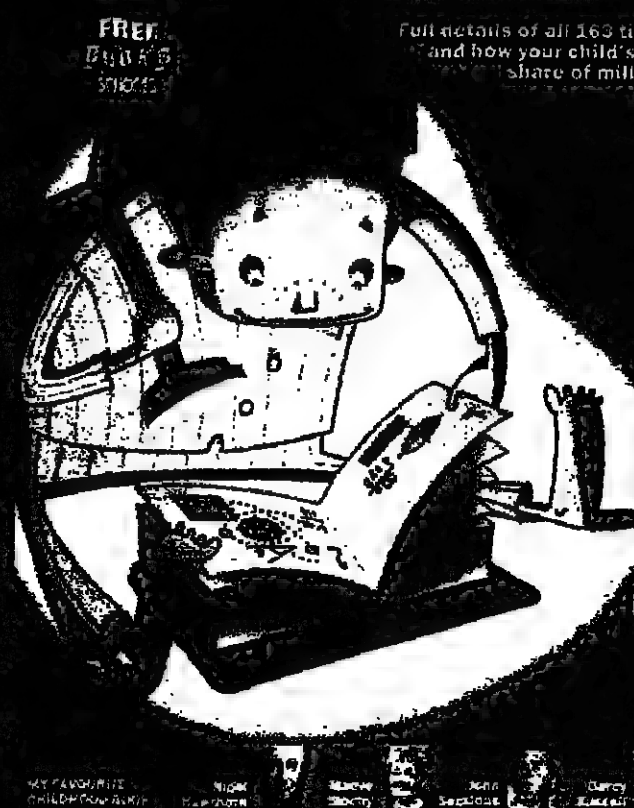
The initiative has been so successful that the community university is developing part-time degree courses. Fifty students have enrolled for a BA in social studies, being taught in Gwynedd and Flintshire. A second part-time course on culture and the arts will be launched this month.

These courses are taught in the evening and at weekends. Students can take between four and ten years to complete their degrees.

30p

THE TIMES

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CHANGING TIMES







# After eleven attempts, we have lift-off

ANI DIFRANCO

*Up Up Up Up Up*  
(Righteous Babe/Cooking Vinyl) COOK 173 £12.99

LESS than a year after the groundbreaking *Little Plastic Castle*, Ani DiFranco is back with a new album, her twelfth in all. But although the 28-year-old singer, songwriter and guitarist from Buffalo, New York, is prolific, she does not put out this stuff for the sake of it; quite the reverse.

The curiously titled *Up Up Up Up Up* finds her stretching out yet again in new and unexpected directions. Musically, she has allowed her songs to develop within the framework of a band identity, as never before, and numbers such as *Know Now Then*, with its oddly skewed rhythm-section vamp, and *Come Away From It*, with its claustrophobic jazz-influenced arrangement, underline how far beyond her folk origins she is now prepared to explore. Her razor-sharp funk guitar riffs in tandem with Julie Wolf's organ part at the start of *Jukebox* is breathtaking.

There is evidence too of a new maturity in DiFranco's writing. *Angry Anywhere* offers a fascinating insight into her own emotional development couched in a message of reassurance to her father: "Now I've seen both of my parents play out the hands that they were dealt/As each year goes by I know more about how my father must have felt".

Coming on at times like an American P.J., Harvey, DiFranco combines an abrasive, witty sense of otherness with an all-important element of humanity. Meanwhile, her musicianship grows apace. It seems the only way for her to go is indeed up.

LONNIE DONEGAN

*Muleskinner Blues*  
(Capricorn) CAP 502 £9.99

ANYONE who has ever been to the British Isles will be

NEW POP ALBUMS

1950s and early 1960s. Lonnie Donegan is now little more than a name echoing down the years from the pre-history of rock'n'roll. His twangy voice conjures recollections of the days when pop music was beamed in on an indistinct signal from Radio Luxembourg and picked up, as if by claudes- tinate arrangement, on valve-driven wirelesses and crystal radio sets in bedrooms around the country.

The primary access to mainstream (BBC) radio for artists of Donegan's ilk was on children's shows such as *Saturday Club*, which may explain why cheesy, neo-vaudeville anthems such as *Does Your Cheating Gum Lose Its Flavour* and *My Old Man's a Dustman* remain among his best-remembered hits.

But as the biggest star of the skiffle craze and an early importer of American blues, gospel and folk styles, notably with his first hit, *Rock Island Line*, the Glasgow-born singer and strummer was nevertheless a key influence on the generation of musicians who invented British rock'n'roll. An early disciple was Van Morrison, who makes two guest appearances on *Muleskinner Blues*. Donegan's first studio album in more than 20 years, along with the veteran jazzman Chris Barber, country-rock guitarist Albert Lee and others.

Now 67, Donegan still commands respect, and lean new recordings of cobwebbed favourites including *Rock Island Line*, *Swing Low* and *Im A Lonesome Soldier* (reworked as a duet with Morrison) recall the magic of his prime. But despite the gritty edge to his performance of Paul Kennerley's *The Weavers' Line* (a 1950s hit), the album suffers from a surfeit of

congerish laments to the good old days such as *Skiffle* ("When I was a little boy my mother said to me...") and the quaint campfire ballad of *Panor Talking Tinker and Pooker Club*.

At its best, as on the title track, *Muleskinner Blues* offers a relaxed round of heritage rock'n'roll in much the same vein as that purveyed by the Notting Hillbillies. But skiffle was only ever a bridge to somewhere else and, despite the album's nostalgic cachet, Donegan's music has a somewhat limited appeal once shorn of its original innocence and vigour.

DAVE ALVIN

*Blackjack David*  
(Hightone HCD 8091 £14.99)

BOB DYLAN and Dave Alvin seem to have formed a mutual admiration society. The title track of *Blackjack David* is a traditional song which Dylan recorded on his 1992 album *Good as I Been to You*, while the 43-year-old roots-rock veteran from Los Angeles has been the guest performer at a dozen or so of Dylan's recent shows.

But Alvin remains very much his own man on his sixth solo outing since the break-up of his group the Blasters. With a deep, slightly cracked voice, as hard and worn as old walnut panelling, he invests the melancholy narratives of *California Snow*, *From a Kitchen Table* and *1968* with a poignant charm that never becomes sentimental or mawkish.

"In a Texas bar there's a man sitting alone... He's drinking beer and he's feeling old," he sings in *Ablene*, another song about ordinary folk nursing their sadnesses with as much dignity as circumstances allow. Acoustic guitars, pedal steel, mandolin, banjo, organ and harmonica swirl around the mix like water dancing over rocks, all steered with inerring melodic grace by Alvin's lugubrious drawl. The message, more of less than not, is that life is a trying and frequently mournful business. So how come this music makes you feel so damn good?

CDs reviewed in *The Times* can be ordered from the Times Music Shop on 0345 023498



Ani DiFranco's new album is called *Up Up Up Up Up*. How very appropriate

JAY-Z

*Vol 2... Hard Knock Life*  
(Northwestside/BMG) 74321 62555 £11.99

ALREADY a massive hit in America, where it was No 1 for five weeks, *Vol 2... Hard Knock Life* follows the depressing pattern established by rapper Jay-Z's previous opus, *In My Lifetime Vol 1*.

A succession of guest artists, including Foxy Brown, DMX,

Too Short and Memphis Bleek, are wheeled in to bolster the musings of the Brooklyn-born rapper who celebrates his grimy materialistic world-view with the customary displays of ultra-aggressive machismo on tracks such as *Money*, *Cash*, *Hoes*, *Ride or Die* and *Nigga What, Nigga Who*.

Samples from sources including the Isley Brothers and the theme from *Shaft* under-

line the lack of original thought. Let alone wit, that is the album's besetting weakness. Only on the title track, with its incongruous little girl chorus sampled from the Broadway cast recording of the musical *Annie*, does the surly star bring anything out of the ordinary to this otherwise pointlessly self-aggrandising project.

DAVID SINCLAIR

# Masters of American mojo

John Clarke delves deep into a monumental testament to the roots of American popular music

To produce a history of American popular music is a daunting enough task. Compiling a nine-volume CD set to go with it is a challenge of Richard Branson-like proportions. It is to author and compiler Allen Lowe's credit that he comes through it without having to ditch in an ocean of ready-made platitudes. *American Pop from Minstrel to Mojo* (on record 1993-1996 (Cadence Jazz Books)) is a provoking and thoughtful study of what Lowe terms Afro-American traditions "within a larger white society, in relation to which it has existed as both prisoner and liberator". He chose 1893 as a starting point because it marks a decade in which important records first started to be made and, he admits, "because I found a nice recording from that year which has acceptable sound and is historically appropriate".

That recording, *Mama's Black Baby* by the Unique Quartette, opens the set of nine CDs, *American Pop: An Audio History* (West Hill Audio Archives WH-1017, distributed in Britain by Harmonia Mundi), which accompanies the book. Although the CDs only go up to 1946 — ten years before the end of the period covered by the book — that doesn't really matter, since it is the formative years of American popular culture which prove the most fascinating. The Unique Quartette, for instance, are just that, a rare example of one of the earliest known recordings of a black vocal group singing a cappella, with gentle harmonies and a lilting melody. The link between them and Boyz n the Hood may be tenuous, but it's there. Other gems on volume one include pioneering black entertainer Bert Williams's *Nobody* (1906), Al Jolson's *You Made Me Love You* (1913) and the first blues artist to record, Mamie Smith, with *Sweet Man o' Mine* (1921).

As the discs — and the book — go on, Lowe attempts to cover every style and facet of popular music, from the early Cajun music of Dennis McGhee, to the jazz classics of Louis Armstrong, the vaudeville ribaldry of Sophie Tucker and the pensive border music of Lydia Mendoza. He also writes about each selection with an enthusiasm and knowledge that sends you scurrying to hear the track. Of Blind Willie Johnson's eerie, slide-guitar masterpiece *Dark Was The Night*, for instance, he says "only a black singer made motherless as a child, then rendered sightless by random irrational adult violence, condemned to live and wander in the most desolate reaches of the rural South and probably subject to waking nightmares of searing psychological heat as well as terrifying night visions of hell and damnation could have sung this".

As the millennium approaches there can be few better guides to the varied, fascinating and vastly influential music of the United States than this.

From there to another boxed set, this time devoted to a single artist, is not as giant a leap as it may sound. *The Complete Country & Western Recordings 1959-1968* by Ray Charles (Rhino R2 75328) is a four-CD set which shows how the blind pianist and singer blended soul, country and blues.

As the *American Pop* set shows, blues and country were not that far away from each other in the 1920s and 1930s. Songs, themes and idioms were shared and the first big star of the *Grand Ole Opry* radio show was black harmonica player DeFord Bailey. But by the time Charles started to cover music in the late 1950s, the two styles had grown apart. It was Charles's inspired move that revealed to a new generation of listeners that country music was more than men in big hats.

Apart from establishing what came to be termed country soul, it also gave country music a much-needed shot in the arm. All those influential hits are here, including *I Can't Stop Loving You*, *Take These Chains from My Heart* and *Busted*. Classics, in whatever genre you place them.

Listen out for Nigeria's Femi Kuti, rising son of a famous father, and Ednaswap, America's hit-writing factory of a band

## Quite a chip off the old Fela

En route from Paris to London by Eurostar, Femi Kuti is attracting a lot of attention thanks to his brightly coloured traditional Nigerian dress. Beside him sits his identical twin wife, Funke, who has been flicking through some French magazines, all of which have her husband on the cover. If both look a little exhausted, it is scarcely a surprise. The previous evening, Kuti had led his 13-strong troupe of musicians and dancers (Funke among them) through a breathtakingly energetic two-hour show at Montmartre's La Cigale. The pair then partied until the early hours of the morning.

For Kuti, it was a double celebration. In addition to selling out his first European show, he has signed a deal with the Polygram label South of Barclay which will result in the release of his famous father's extensive back catalogue. Consequently, this month the first of 50 albums by Fela Anikulapo Kuti, the undisputed inventor of Afrobeat, will be available in Britain. Sadly, Kuti Sr will reap none of the rewards: 18 months ago, he died of an AIDS-related illness.

For 36-year-old Femi Kuti, his father's death had extraordinary repercussions. "In Nigeria my fans believe that my father is reincarnated in me," he explains. "For years nobody wanted to know me. Now I am worshipped as he was. I am expected to play his songs, to act like him, dance like him and dress as he did."

More importantly, Nigerians are counting on Femi, the eldest of Fela's three legitimate sons, to follow in his father's political footsteps. Fela was idolised not only for his funk-flavoured songs, but also for his socialist stand against the oppressive military regime



Femi Kuti learnt a lot from his father, the legendary Fela Anikulapo Kuti — such as how not to bring up his own son

which ruled Nigeria. Regularly imprisoned and tortured for his outspoken criticism of the Government, Fela devoted his life to the plight of the poor. His memorial service in Lagos, at which Femi played a concert, attracted more than a million mourners.

The younger Kuti's relationship with both his father and his father's fans has been far from straightforward. A member of Fela's sprawling band (which often numbered up to 80 players) from the age of 18, Femi quit after six years to form his own outfit, now known as the Positive Force. "My father was furious when I left," he recalls. "He didn't utter one word to me for five years. Then in 1991 we started talking again and I asked to play at his club. After that we became very close, although a lot of his followers continued to refuse to acknowledge my music." The pair's reunion coincided with the release of Femi's second album, his own raw take on Afrobeat's funky fusion of soul-

ful jazz, driving percussion and sharp social comment. "I knew that my father had called my first album rubbish," says Kuti. "I launched the follow-up at his club. He sat in the audience and I could tell he was waiting for me to disgrace him again. I saw the shock on his face when we started to play. I watched him get up and dance. Then he came on stage and insisted he take a solo."

In 1995 Femi released *Wonderland Park*, an album so accomplished that some critics insisted it had to have been written by his father. "It was a national scandal," says Kuti. "My father had to go to the papers to tell the people that they were not his songs."

Even if Fela were still alive, similar accusations could not be levelled at his son's latest album, *Shoki Shoki*. Although rooted in Afrobeat, short songs such as the infectious poppy first single *Beng Beng Beng* have been brought up to date by a host of contemporary dance influences. "I grew

up listening to acts like Michael Jackson and the Temptations," says Kuti. "I know the power of a four-minute song. My father's tracks could last up to an hour. I found that so frustrating. I may be destined to play Afrobeat, but that doesn't mean I can't make it my own. I love rock, rap, house and jungle. I want to introduce those sounds to my music. I want to take Afrobeat into the future."

Kuti has similar hopes for his three-year-old son, who is soon to start piano lessons. "My father bought me a trumpet at eight and a piano at 12, but I was never allowed a teacher. He always said that those with a gift don't need to be taught. I disagree."

In fact, Kuti has rejected several of his father's beliefs. While Fela extolled the virtues of marijuana, Femi (a reformed dope smoker) is against drugs and alcohol. While his father was famed for his promiscuity (the once "married" 27 women in a day), Femi is devoted to Funke. It is Kuti's attitude towards his son, however, which marks him out as his own man. Despite now leading a group called Movement Against Second Slavery, Kuti refuses to use his young son as a political tool, as he himself was.

"I was taken out of school at 12 to protest with my father about soldiers being able to discipline students," he says. "I was arrested, locked up and beaten many times. I don't want to force my son to be like me. If he is not his own person, his life has no meaning."

LISA VERRICO

• Beng Beng Beng is out now on Barclay/Polygram. Shoki Shoki is released on Feb 8

Music UK is the market leader in canned music, the provider of that infuriating soundtrack that pursues you around supermarket aisles and hotel lobbies. The company has just compiled its chart of last year's most-played songs and sitting at the top is Natalie Imbruglia's *Torn*.

You might think this would delight Anne Preven of Ednaswap. She wrote the song and stands to make enough royalties to retire to a tropical island. Yet she is appalled by her own success. "At the beginning it was weird and interesting. Now you can't get into an elevator without hearing it. It would be terrible if we were only known for *Torn*," she says.

Although you may not have heard of Preven's band Ednaswap, you soon will, for they happen to be some of the finest songwriters on the planet. *Sanctuary* from Madonna's *Bedtime Stories* album is another Ednaswap original, written by Preven and the band's guitarist, Scott Cutler.

Their supremely confident new album, *Wonderland Park*, proves there are plenty more where that came from and taps a rich vein of classic songwriting. Shrewd producers in search of an off-the-peg hit are no doubt plundering its radio-friendly melodies as we speak. Yet if there is any justice, the album should also finally establish Ednaswap as stars in their own right.

But first, to clear up the Torn saga. Back in 1993 and before forming their band, Preven and Cutler visited London. "We had met in New York and immediately clicked as songwriters," says Preven, who writes all the lyrics. "But we knew absolutely nothing about the music industry and the producer Phil Thornalley helped us to arrange some of our songs." They made a tape which included *Torn* and Thornalley began hawking it

## Torn apart, doing fine



Madonna and Natalie Imbruglia are among the stars to be thankful for the songwriting talents of Ednaswap

around. He eventually struck gold when he gave the song to Imbruglia and it became one of the biggest singles of 1998.

For a long time Ednaswap were bitter, complaining that Imbruglia had never acknowledged their part in her success. "An interviewer said something nice about her lyrics and she just said, 'Thank you'. She didn't even mention us," Preven complained. Last month the royalties belatedly started trickling through and at the MTV Europe awards the Australian star managed a brusque thank you to Ednaswap as she waved her award for the song she didn't write.

"In the beginning she wasn't keen on drawing attention to the fact that she didn't write it," says a now mellower Preven. "She's done better since. It's all come out and it doesn't really matter." If the Imbruglia experience

made Ednaswap wary of others recording their songs, working for Madonna was far happier. "She was very open and respectful," Preven says. "She asked what we thought of her version. She was comfortable about letting others into the picture. At first I hated her version, but once I heard the album I understood what she was doing."

The five-strong Ednaswap formed in Los Angeles in 1994 when Preven and Cutler returned from London. They swiftly landed a record deal with EastWest on the strength of just four songs. "We were rehearsing in Scott's living-room and they came to hear us play an acoustic set," Preven recalls. "We only had four songs and we had to think of excuses to stop after we had played them all rather than admit we had no more." The label thought it was

signing an acoustic-based folk-pop band but, perversely, Ednaswap then went and made a big, melodramatic glam-rock album. "They were furious, especially with *Torn*. Our demo was more like Natalie's version and then we made it really heavy and obnoxious," Preven says.

They were dropped, but their large live following meant they were immediately signed by another label. Their second album, *Wacko Magno*, was intense and laden with layers of dense sound. "There were all our influences in there, from Led Zeppelin and AC/DC through to David Bowie," Preven says.

*Wonderland Park* was conceived as a solo project after the band almost split at the end of 1997. "It was the end of a long tour. We were burnt out and there were a lot of problems," Preven says. "We started writing in Scott's house and it sounded very different. I've always been a fan of singer-songwriters such as Joni Mitchell and I guess that started coming out. Eventually we realised there was no reason why it shouldn't be an Ednaswap record."

It is, in fact, the melodic folk-pop album their first label wanted. "It's a more manicured sound," admits Preven. "We wanted to allow more space so that the record highlights the songs rather than the arrangements. We got sick of riff rock. We felt we needed to make an album that was gentle and beautiful, with the lyrics and melodies out front."

What is left is an album of songs which will sparkle even when piped into an elevator. And this time, hopefully, it will be Ednaswap you hear singing them.

NIGEL

WILLIAMSON

• *Wonderland Park* is released by Island Records



## LISTINGS

Liz Lochhead in London

## ARTS

## JAZZ

Mike Westbrook's peak

## RECOMMENDED TODAY

Guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Mark Hargreaves

## LONDON

**WOYZECK.** The London International Music Festival opens with a mini-drama based on the Schiller play, accompanied by haunting orchestra music and performed by the Josef Hall Company from France. Parnell Rooms (0171-930 4242). Opens tomorrow, 8pm.

**PERFECT DAYS.** Scottish Redmond's award-winning performance as the thirteenth-century minstrel hawking a baby. John Tiffany directs Liz Lochhead's poignant comedy. Hampstead (0171-722 5301). Opens tonight, 7pm.

**THE EXMOOR SINGERS.** The award-winning mixed choir under James Jarvis opens its concert with Poulenc's *Stabat Mater*. St John's (0171-222 1051). Tomorrow, 7.30pm.

**LONDON SCHOOLS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA.** Donat's Cello Concerto and Joseph Suk's tragic masterpiece, the *Asrael* Symphony, comprise tonight's programme by the young musicians of the LSSO. Christopher Adley conducts. Barbican (0171-222 5301). Tonight, 7.30pm.

## ELSEWHERE

**BIRMINGHAM.** The renowned soprano Anne Evans leads a distinguished cast in a concert performance by the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus of Poulenc's *Stabat Mater*. Walker conducts. Repeated next Thursday, 7.30pm. Symphony Hall (0121-212 3333). Tomorrow, 7pm.

**GLASGOW.** The gift of 19th-century Vienna is recreated in two concerts by the Glasgow Sinfonia Orchestra directed by Christopher Warren-Green. With the Johann Strauss Dancers. With the Strauss Dancers. The Royal Concert Hall (0141-287 5511). Tomorrow and Sun, 7.30.

**MANCHESTER.** Vasily Sinaisky conducts the BBC Philharmonic Orchestra in the last concert in its series celebrating Russian music. Here Prokofiev's Second Violin Concerto is joined by Scriabin's in *Memories* and Rachmaninov's Third Symphony. Bridgewater Hall (0161-907 8000). Tomorrow, 7.30pm.



Walter Weller conducts *Fidelio* in Birmingham

## NEW WEST END SHOWS

Jeremy Kingston's choice of theatre showing in London  
 ■ House full, returns only ■ Some seats available ■ Seats at all prices

■ **KRAFFT'S LAST TAPE.** Edward Petherbridge's touring performance as Beckett's ancient consultant, replaying lost time. Also the rarely performed *Broth-36* seconds long. Arts (0171-528 3343).

■ **QUATRE MAINS.** Astonishing dance for hands created by Andrew Dawson and Jozef Houben. Lyric Studio (0161-741 2311).

■ **CHICAGO.** Maria Friedman injects new blood into the hit revival of *Kander and Ebb's* musical about murder and Sicilian crime. Adelphi (0171-344 0055).

■ **JESUS MY BOY.** Tom Conti in John Dowie's witty comedy about a comedy group. Joseph's (0171-494 8070).

■ **PETER PARK.** Justin Salinger in the title role, with David Troughton as

Captain Hook. In return of Fiona Laird's enjoyable production. Olivier (0171-528 3343).

■ **THE SHOWMAN.** The much-loved Raymond Briggs characters soar over the audience in Bill Alexander's joyful production. Peacock, WCC (0171-653 8222).

■ **THE KING AND I.** While a happy tune with Phil Williams's Steam Factory production of the hit musical, *The King and I* is a joy. BAC (0171-222 2222).

■ **THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.** Gregory Doran's production from Stratford, chiefly notable for Philip Voss's superb Shylock. Barbican (0171-638 8801).

■ **ARABIAN NIGHTS.** An Arab, a British and a Jewish tale. The Royal Opera House (0161-907 8000).

## FILMS ON GENERAL RELEASE

James Christopher's choice of the latest movies

## NEW RELEASES

**LITTLE VOICE (15).** Mark Herman's wonderful version of John Carver's stage hit. Jane Horrocks sings glorious covers of torch songs. Michael Caine, Evan McGregor, Brenda Blethyn and Jim Broadbent stars around in the foreground.

**THE SIEGE (15).** Donal Washington, Annette Bening and Bruce Willis rip over each other's bodies as they try to defend an Arab hotel.

**PSYCHO (15).** Hopeless remake of Hitchcock's original. Gus Van Sant re-shoots this classic film in a modern, messy, and brutal style.

**THE SIEGE (15).** Donal Washington, Annette Bening and Bruce Willis rip over each other's bodies as they try to defend an Arab hotel.

**PSYCHO (15).** Hopeless remake of Hitchcock's original. Gus Van Sant re-shoots this classic film in a modern, messy, and brutal style.

**ANGEL DUST (15).** Cool, classy Japanese melodrama about a psycho detective who has to nail her lover and mentor for killings on the Tokyo tube. Bogo Ishii directs a compelling, sophisticated psychodrama that ultimately has the many bodies.

**TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT (PG).** A resolutely scratchy reprint of Howard Hawks's 1944 classic in which Bogart's stylish fish in a barrel and Bogart fish in a barrel.

**CURRENT**

**THE ACID HOUSE (18).** Three darkly comic tales of drugs, drink and hallucination by Irvine Welsh. An independent classic. With Stephen McKee, Ewan Bremner, and Kevin McKidd. Director, Paul McGuigan.

**SITCOM (18).** A French bourgeois family unravels itself. Mildly diverting but ultimately has the many bodies.

**STAR TREK: INSURRECTION (PG).** Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew come to the rescue of a peaceful race who have found the alien of youth. Lighthearted. With Donal Murphy, F. Murray Abraham. Director, Jonathan Frakes.



In the first flush of success: the All Saints — Nicole Appleton, Melanie Blatt, Shaznay Lewis and Natalie Appleton — at last year's Brit Awards

## Belly-buttons fluff it

A year ago All Saints were the elegant antidote to national Spice overload. So what went wrong?

YOU may recall that at this time last year, All Saints were all that and a bag of chips.

The vital bits of the dog. The bee's knees. Their timing was perfect — a mere week before the sublime *Never Ever* went to No 1, we were experiencing a Spice overload.

*The Movie* had carpet-bombed Britain, by being the only thing to do on National Boredom Day, ie, Boxing Day, and left the nation feeling slightly queasy — if only for the product-placement scene, where the Spices sucked on Chupa-Chups while drinking Pepsi and eating Walker's crisps.

Compared to this pig-in-muck marketing, All Saints seemed like divine, elegant minimalism — a cleansing bowl of miso soup after a year of veal and cherry pie. It was impeccable timing: with their baggy combats and old men's vests, a stripped-down, sexy hymn and a dance that was a mere warm-up exercise ("Okay, now shake your shoulders girls and — relax!").

It all seemed so 1998, so tasteful. Melanie Blatt was proudly flying the flag for gorgeous chicks with big noses; Shaznay Lewis was a successful blonde, British singer/songwriter — still a suspiciously under-represented force in the charts; and the two Appleton

sisters seemed fairly inoffensive, in an *FRIM* kind of way. But a year later, it's all gone horribly pear-shaped. For starters, it must be the quickest implosion on record: after a mere 12 months, Natalie has stomped off; Melanie is breastfeeding until next Christmas; and the other two seem so sour and bored it's like watching polar bears banging their heads against the bars in a zoo. Their last couple of television appearances have given the impression that they are world-famous for chewing gum and rolling their eyes. "It must have been an amazing year for you," "Yeh, Really, truly" — I'm just looking forward to getting home for a bit. While "talks" have been going on over Christmas and the new year, trying to heal the rift and get the cash-cows on their feet again, it might be time to look at the reasons why the rift occurred in the first place.

Obviously, a lot of it is down to what happens in the first flush of fame: people go mad. Within a month of *Never Ever* going to No 1, everyone under the age of 30 was shivering in tiny vests and wearing their hair ironed, with one slide. Marks & Spencer now does

combats for £29.99; and when M&S starts manufacturing the 1990s equivalent of Beanie Wigs, you've obtained the level of fame that will chop on your brains and destroy your reason within a week.

Another part of All Saints' current malaise can be put down to their dating arrangements. There is something disturbing about a group who all have famous boyfriends. In the past year Natalie has had an on/off thing with Robbie Williams; Nicole has been out and broken up with Jamie Theakston; Melanie became pregnant by the bass player with Jamiroquai; and Shaznay has jammed up Damon Albarn at the bar.

Apart from the worrying signal that none of the All Saints

has dated outside the Met Bar, it also suggests that the girls have only dated people who are already tremendously jaded by celebrity. It's a crash-course in ennui — fuelled by the fact that, if you are a famous couple, *This Morning* with Richard and Judy can power a whole phone-in on one of your front-page rows.

Another skin of tension is the interband chemistry. By all accounts, Shaznay is the creative force, Melanie the voice, and the Appleton sisters two of Melanie's friends along for the ride. With Melanie out of action for most of the year, Shaznay was left touring the world with a mate's mates — rather like those awkward nights when you arrange to go drinking with a mate and some of her friends, she cops off after 20 minutes, and you are left swigging Bud in the snug with two people you don't know that well. All you have to talk about is your mutual friend — and as Shaznay was reportedly none too happy that Melanie had got up the duff in the most important year of their career, that must have led to a lot of weighted comments and, ahem, pregnant silences.

And besides, it's just *Amazing Grace* with beats.

## CAITLIN MORAN

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And besides, it's just *Amazing Grace* with beats.

## Living the blues

MIKE WESTBROOK

The Orchestra of Smith's Academy

(Enja 9358 2)

AUTUMN 1992, when the live

big-band portion of this album

was recorded, marked an artistic

peak for Mike Westbrook's

jazz orchestra. Fresh from a

three-day festival in Catania

entirely dedicated to West-

brook music, the 22-piece

band deliver material from

projects ranging from *On**Duke's Birthday* to *London**Bridge is Broken Down* with

their characteristic mix of tight

discipline and bustling exuber-

ance.

The grounding of a number

of pieces in the blues (includ-

ing a 23-minute bonus track,

*Blues for Terence*, performed

at 1995's Cheltenham Festival

of Jazz) adds to the album's

appeal. A fine addition to the

Westbrook discography. **B**

CHRIS PARKER

## JAZZ ALBUMS

by the Steve Martland Band renders them easily accessible, notwithstanding their harmonic and rhythmic complexities. But the agency of Kate Westbrook's texts and the skilful deployment of a series of superb soloists — Anthony Kerr, Chris Biscoe, Alan Barnes, Peter Whyman and Dominique Pifarély among them — mark this record out as an archetypal Westbrook production: subtle, wide-ranging, intelligent, and irresistibly enjoyable.

CHRIS PARKER

## JUST EAST OF JAZZ

SWERVE

(EJOJ CD2)

LIKE an increasing number of

their contemporaries — from

John Zorn's *Masada* ensembles

in America to the Klezmer

Swingers in Britain — Just

East of Jazz operates on the

cusp between traditional Jew-

ish music and jazz.

Where Zorn's music utilises

Ornette Coleman-based jazz,

however, Just East of Jazz, a

quintet formed in 1993, special-

ises in a jaunty fusion sound,

spearheaded by Jeremy Sho-

ham's reeds and the guitars of

co-founder James Woodrow

and briskly propelled by a

punchy rhythm section (bass

player Phil Scragg, drummer

Rick Finlay), augmented by

the bright keyboard work and

occasional vocals of Hilary

Cameron.

With material ranging from

vigorous skiffs incorporating

the odd bebop lick to lightly

swinging, almost samba-like

wafts, and with the odd tricky

time signature drawing on

Shoham's experience with Bal-

kan music, Swerve — the

band's second album — consoli-

dates their growing reputation

and serves as a fine appeti-

ser for their upcoming 26-

date British tour.

CHRIS PARKER

## OPERA &amp; BALLET

COLISEUM 0171 528 3343 (400)

ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET

**THE NUTCRACKER**

David Dawson

Wed Jan 8, Mon Jan 11, Sat Jan 14

10.15, 7.30, 5.00, 2.50, 1.00

11-15, 16-20, 21-25, 26-30

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## THEATRES

ADOLPH

0171 528 3343 (400)

ENGLISH NATIONAL BALLET

**THE NUTCRACKER**

David Dawson

Wed Jan 8, Mon Jan 11, Sat Jan 14

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# Left-wing flagship caught in friendly fire

The subtext to a possible magazine takeover mirrors Labour's wider battles, says Roland Watson

The political wreckage strewn round Westminster the space of a few days may have ruined the government's Christmas, but it seems to have clarified the immediate future of the *New Statesman*. By chance, two of the three government casualties directly affect the fortunes of the left-of-centre political weekly. Geoffrey Robinson, former Paymaster General, was it. Peter Mandelson, the former Trade Secretary, is best friend to the man who wants to own it.

It is one of the ironies of the episode that while the two former ministers were friendly enough to Mr Robinson to lend him £373,000 to buy his house,



Robert Harris no bid yet

neither man is happy with the idea of the left-of-centre magazine being taken over by a right-wing publisher.

Their differences prompted Robert Harris, the millionaire author of such highly successful novels as *Enigma*, and a friend of Mr Mandelson, to express his interest in buying the title in mid-December.

Before Christmas, the initiative lay with Mr Harris. He and his business partner, Nick Butler, honorary treasurer of the Fabians and a corporate affairs executive for BP, were

putting the final touches to their financials and were planning to lodge a bid in the new year.

At the time, Mr Robinson looked a weak political figure following the relentless scrutiny of his past business links with Robert Maxwell. He was also constrained on the issue because the *New Statesman*, along with all his other outside business interests, had been placed in a blind trust out of his reach when he became a minister.

But all that has changed. With both men now out of office and adjusting to their new lives, the prospects of a proprietorial handover appear to have lengthened considerably. At the very least, nothing is imminent.

Mr Harris concedes as much. "Everything has been rather overtaken by events. At the moment the whole thing is in abeyance." He says he is waiting to hear from Mr Robinson. "Until that happens, we are completely in the dark."

If Mr Harris is unclear about the way ahead, Peter Wilby, the editor of the *New Statesman*, is not. Having made his bones about his hostility to the idea of a takeover, he insists that it will not happen. "Geoffrey has given no indication that he wishes to sell it. It's still owned by Geoffrey Robinson. It has not been, and is not being, put up for sale. I welcome that."

Mr Wilby's conviction will hearten Labour traditionalists horrified at the prospect of new Labour takeover implied by Mr Harris's interest. But it is unlikely to stem the private criticisms in Blairite circles of the *New Statesman*'s current regime, and the manoeuvring that has turned the fate of the magazine into a microcosm of wider political battles within the Labour movement.

Some, inside Downing Street, are downright about the *New Statesman* to the point of abuse. "The *New Statesman* is supposed to be a weekly, politically interesting, left-of-centre

## NEW STATESMAN



## Will Geoffrey Robinson sell up?

The prospect of negotiations between the former Paymaster General and Robert Harris appears to have dwindled

magazine. At the moment it's managing only one of these — its coming out weekly," was the caustic observation of one senior Labour official.

Another spoke of the sense of disappointment inside No 10 that the *New Statesman* was not contributing to the political debate. "They feel more in sorrow than in anger, that it has lost its way."

Those sort of sentiments fuel the fears on the left that the Harris bid is little more than a front designed to shove aside Mr Robinson, Gordon Brown's friend, associate and benefactor, to make way for a Blairite takeover. The conspiracy theorists point out that Mr Butler's wife, Rosaleen Hughes, is a friend of Cherie Blair.

The scenario causes inevitable alarm at the *New Statesman*. "It would be very damaging indeed for an independent magazine to be shoved be-

tween the Treasury and Downing Street," said one insider. However, the battle lines are as much about style as ideological stances.

Mr Robinson may be close to Mr Brown, but not even the Blairite critics can accuse him of using the magazine as a platform for the Chancellor in particular or the Brown camp in general. Insiders say he has avoided even the merest hint of editorial interference since taking over three years ago.

He would be proprietor is also only too keenly aware of the dangers of becoming overly partisan within the Labour Party. Mr Harris says that it would be the "absolute kiss of death" and insists that is not his motivation.

Instead he has characterised the magazine as arid and remote, contrasting it with the

lifestyle columns of *The Spectator*, its right-wing rival, which sells about twice as many copies.

Despite his insistence that he has both the money — the likely price tag would be about £3 million — and the game-plan, there remain lingering doubts about how wholehearted Mr Harris's interest is, or what his motives are.

He says he revived a ten-year-old idea about owning the title after hearing Mr Robinson putting it about last year that he was interested in selling. However, nobody in the Robinson camp claims to have heard such murmurings. And although Mr Harris has signalled his interest twice to the magazine's governing trust, he has yet to table a bid.

One close observer of the saga suggests that Mr Harris wants it on one level, but that his interest is diminished by

Mr Mandelson's departure from office.

Mr Harris's comments following the resignation drama do little to suggest otherwise. "I'm relaxed about it. If it happens, fine. If it doesn't, then OK," he told *The Times*.

The other great unknown is Mr Robinson. Those close to him say that he has not rescused the *New Statesman* from bankruptcy, bringing its annual losses down from £2 million to a projected £200,000, only to pass it on when it is on the brink of making money.

But although the current regime is convinced that he will hang on to it, the 60-year-old Mr Robinson faces a big decision now that he is freshly liberated from office. Is his future in politics, or does he return to a business career?

The fate of the *New Statesman* could rest on which way he goes.

## A reluctant editor's taste of success

Roger Alton was the fourth editor in five years when he arrived at *The Observer* last July to a daunting inheritance. Under *The Guardian*'s ownership, sales had fallen by 100,000 to an historic 50-year low of 403,000. After 24 successful years at *The Guardian*, where he had launched the G2 tabloid section after stints in news, sport, arts and features, it was hardly surprising that he was a reluctant editor.

His task of turning round *The Observer* is as difficult as any in national newspapers and will require long-term commitment from the Guardian Media Group. Yet after his first six months in the chair, Alton's *Observer* has suddenly started to click.

The best test of any newspaper is how many times it makes the reader want to stop and read as they browse through the pages. On that test, Alton has already made *The Observer* a more readable



newspaper with a sharper news sense. He led the paper last Sunday on a report that Geoffrey Robinson had bankrolled Gordon Brown's opposition think-tank with up to £200,000, and put Nick Hornby's £2 million Penguin transfer deal on the front page when *The Sunday Times* relegated the story to its diary.

Both stories were heavily followed up on Monday. With its serious attention to politics and such commentators as Will Hutton, Andrew Marr and Andrew Rawnsley writing from the liberal left, it is also becoming a must-read for those who follow the machinations of new Labour and find *The Sunday Times* and *The Sunday Telegraph* too Tory and Europhobic.

When a newspaper suddenly clicks, it is always fascinating to find out what qualities its editor has brought to his job. Alton's first achievement, according to his staff, is that he has simply made *The Observer* a nicer place to work after the in-fighting between the previous Editor, Will Hutton, and his deputy, Jocelyn Targett, a highly talented journalist who nevertheless inspired fear and loathing among older *Observer* hands.

Alton is a workaholic — a motivating, dominating, hands-on editor, who roams

the office with a constant stream of ideas. He is not a writing technician — his journalists know that he can do almost every job as well as they can. Although 17 journalists were recently declared redundant, one result is a new sense of team spirit in an office that a year ago was riven by feuds. Another is a growing sense of self-confidence.

Alton's first job was to rid the paper of the worst excesses of the previous regime: the over-tricky layouts, front pages that defied every newspaper textbook, and the magazine-style Review front that displayed a photograph with no accompanying text.

Since then, his main priority has been sorting out the main news section, still the beating heart of a proper newspaper, and making it easier for readers to find their way round the paper. Three new tabloid sections — Cash, Escape and Screen — were introduced last Sunday, boosting the total to eight, and there will be TV advertising to sell the paper this weekend. The new sections represent a significant investment by the GNG management as well as a clear signal of their faith in Alton as the Editor who may at last turn the tide.

With *The Sunday Times* out of sight, his main battle is to see off the *Independent on Sunday*. *The Observer* outsells the "Sindy" by 150,000, but the latter also has a new Editor in Kim Fletcher and a new owner in Tony O'Reilly, who is equally determined to carry the battle to *The Observer*. When *The Observer* introduced its three new sections last week, the *Sindy* responded by cutting its cover price to 50p in the North and Midlands and achieved a significant lift in sales.

An ailing newspaper cannot be transformed overnight. If Alton's early success continues, it will be at least a year before its lost readers start to notice. The best that can be said after the first six months is that he has held *The Observer*'s sales at around 400,000 after five years in which it consistently fell. Given the ferocious competition from the three rival Sunday broadsheets, he will have done well if *The Observer* is selling an extra 25,000 copies by the end of the year.

## Hunting of the Nark

JUST when we thought that standards in the Mandelson-Brown battle could sink no further, the discredited Mandelson lobbyist Derek "Dolly" Draper drops the bombshell that he was recently taunted about his clinical depression by a member of the Brown camp. Draper, who famously boasted that he could arrange meetings with Cabinet Ministers, has been forced to reveal that he was treated at the Priory clinic last autumn for depression, from which he has suffered for four years.

In a column in *The Spectator* he reveals that he received an unkind pair message about his affliction, which was sent, he seems to think, by *The Mirror*'s political editor, Kevin Maguire.

Draper, who has criticised Maguire's friendship with Charlie Wilson in the past, denounces labelling Maguire "Whelan's Nark". However, that did not stop his pager recently bleeping with the message: "You're up back in the Priory, from the Nark."

■ WHEN Christopher Dunkley was sacked from Radio 4's *Feedback*, there was an outcry. But a bigger scandal is the way *Poets of View* on BBC1 is whittled away. Extended to 15 minutes under Ann Robinson, it has been off over to Carole Fordman, it has been off the air since August, and now, I hear, it is new winter schedule in the same form.

With *Biteback* also dropped, the late-night BBC2 discussion show *Off Air* night *Biteback* dropped off until Easter, this means that there is nowhere on BBC networks for people to voice

their views. But with the licence fee reaching the £100 barrier, increasing protests at the BBC's over-enthusiastic adoption of "letterbox" format in advance of cheap digital TV sets, and repeats clogging up prime time, it suits the bigwigs to stifle debate. The concept of an independent watchdog — an Othello for viewers — becomes more attractive.

■ I'M ONE of many journalists who has taken the occasional call from Sophie Rhys-Jones and she stands out



for one reason: she is polite, and is prepared to take "sorry not interested" for an answer. This does not make her a hot-shot PR, and the truth is that she was encouraged by her former boss, Brian MacLaurin (who remains a friend), to set up her own business in 1996 because her romance with Prince Edward made her more famous than the agency's clients. Her company has prospered — turnover is around £400,000 a year — thanks largely to a select roster of royal accounts. The royal couple, incidentally, have the BBC and ITN on tenterhooks: their choice of St George's Chapel, Windsor, for a "family wedding" suggests that TV cameras will be excluded.

■ AMID the fuss about revamping *Newsnight* and *Channel 4 News* — both pretty successful efforts — I would

advise the Independent Television Commission (ITC) to keep an eye on Channel 5 over its elastic definition of what constitutes current affairs. Independent producers are tendering ideas to replace its regular respected *What's the Story?* slot, provided for the past two years by Twenty Twenty Television. Under its licence Channel 5 must screen an hour of current affairs each week. Previous attempts to include consumer programmes in the quota were scuppered by the ITC. I'm told sex, crime and sensationalism are favoured after CS's hits with *The Real Monty* and *Swindon Superheroes*. There is a definite change, say insiders, since Chris Shaw replaced Tim Gardam as head of factual programmes. In his new job as C4's Director of Programmes, Gardam — a former editor of *Newsnight* — is making

waves to stop it becoming a gravy train. He is attending C4's programme finance meetings and cancelling projects — unless they provide value for money.

■ YOU lose one battle, then regroup for the next. Just before Christmas the BBC lost the argument for an inflation-busting leap in the licence fee. Its campaign never recovered from Sir John Birt's honesty in blurring out his designs last summer before a PR campaign was prepared. But on January 20, Sir Christopher Bland, the BBC Chairman, launches the next push: a collection of essays on the theme Public Purposes in Broadcasting, from economists. It is designed to influence a new BBC review panel appointed to advise Chris Smith, the Culture, Media and Sports Secretary, about the corporation's future.

News makeovers owe a debt to Street-Porter, says Michael Gove

SOMETIMES you have to fail magnificently that others might succeed. And nowhere is that more painfully true than in broadcasting. Television's least-watched programmes are often its most influential. Such shows as *Stab in the Dark*, which I once presented and which won a reputation as the biggest turkey to flatter on to Channel 4, have influenced successors such as the successful Mark Thomas series on the same channel. And the recent makeover of *Channel 4 News* and BBC 2's *Newsnight*, the two factual flagships of their respective stations, owes a great deal to a broadcasting innovator whose pioneering shows were considered less than glorious.

The broadcasting mother who failed herself, but succeeded magnificently through her children, is Janet Street-Porter. She was the pioneer of a broadcasting genre, "yoof TV", which secured more bad notices than viewers. But the last laugh is hers. The techniques she pioneered, while almost no one, save critics, were watching, have permeated mainstream TV. The first "yoof" show which she brought to term was an ITV Sunday lunchtime show called *Network 7*. It sought to create a greater sense of intimacy and accessibility by using roving presenters in a set designed to look post-party. Clubbers were expected to rise bleary-eyed at noon on the sabbath and absorb a mix of current affairs and lifestyle features. It wasn't only the content that was an exotic melange, but the presentation. The presenters' pieces to camera were supplemented with complementary sources of information, whether facts running ticker-tape style at the bottom of the screen or footage running alongside the presenter in vision.

The classic style of TV presentation was always to aim for the uncluttered. The screen was to be filled with either studio, pre-packaged film, or a graphic listing facts. Mixing them on screen was a solecism, an offence against TV gram-

## Here is the TV news, according to Janet

mar. But Street-Porter's respect for any conventional form of grammar has always been small. She sought to mix as enthusiastically as any DJ in the clubs her prospective viewers frequented. Older critics found the competing sources of information ugly and bewildering. The same might have been said of some of the

presenters. But whatever the individual's failings, the concept struck a chord.

For teens and twentysomethings, the idea of absorbing stimuli simultaneously from different sources was becoming commonplace. *Network 7* was aimed at a generation that did its homework while listening to music, or watching the TV, and still got a pause. It was the same generation who grew up screen-literate and are at home running several programmes on their PC while keeping an ear cocked at their sound system. The first multimedia generation found nothing strange in *Network 7*'s style.

That is why they will be at home with the new *Newsnight* and *Channel 4 News*. The sight of presenters in informal sets, or reading their cues while images run in the background, is comfortable for them. But their seniors may complain that too much is going on and that the presentation is hectic and confusing.

The greater informality of news presentation overall has so far been attributed not to Street-Porter, but to the success of *Channel 5 News*. The sight of Kirsty Young striding around the Channel 5 newsroom while five facts roll off the graphic display has excited executives. But *Channel 5 News* is a child of the Street-Porter revolution. And it is no coincidence that one of *Channel 4 News*'s highest-profile signposts from Channel 5, the talented correspondent Sarah Smith, first cut her teeth under Street-Porter, along with many others in the mainstream.

It would be wrong to overestimate the scale of change on the two flagships. The BBC prefers to term the changes on *Newsnight* a "refresh" rather than a relaunch. Jon Snow has been at pains this week to stress that the opportunities created by technical innovation will not usurp traditional news judgments.

But, in the spirit of broadcasting balance, it would be wrong to deny the debt that Paxman, Snow, Wark and others owe to the snaggled-toothed innovator.



Topical: Jeremy Paxman on *Newsnight*





Resigned spin meisters: Charlie Whelan, left, who has decided to step down as the Chancellor's press officer, and Peter Mandelson, the fallen Trade and Industry Secretary

## Carry on spinning, doc

The glum faces at Westminster this week did not belong only to Labour politicians surveying the damage and corpses left behind after their Government's Christmas turf wars.

A small group of political journalists had reason to look anxious, too. The departure of Chancellor Gordon Brown's amiably thuggish spin-doctor, Charlie Whelan, threatened to leave their newspapers with gaping white holes in future.

For some, Whelan acted as a life-support machine. Desperate for a story to meet an editor's demand for exclusives? Ask Charlie. Need a reaction to a slight, real or imagined, on his boss? Ask Charlie. Want a good quote about one of the Chancellor's Cabinet enemies? Ask Charlie.

And, as Whelan admitted, he would not always let veracity get in the way of a good story. To say that he was sometimes economical with the truth is being economical with the truth itself. The icing on this half-baked cake was that the intrepid reporters did not even have to

leave the bar. They knew when they could find Whelan in his favourite spinning spot, the Red Lion pub in Whitehall. More often than not he would hunt them down in the Commons' Stranger's Bar to pass on his latest *mal mot*.

Of course, the lucky few of "Charlie's angels" who consistently wrote favourable reports about the Chancellor are not the only ones who are now concerned that rigid clamps are about to be put on their lifeblood — information.

Whelan is suspected of punishing those who refused to toe the line by freezing them out. He was even thought to have suggested that editors should sack senior political staff. But the fallout from his briefings kept everyone in business for days or even weeks. The concern among the entire pack of political journalists is much deeper. The question they are pondering after a fortnight of trauma for the Govern-

ment is: are the days of the spin-doctor over?

The spin-doctor's answer might be that things will now change dramatically. But the real reply, in words adapted from the Charlie Whelan lexicon of reactions to unfriendly stories, is "garbage and rollocks". And he should know. Several days after announcing that he had decided to leave his hero-boss's employ, Whelan was acting as though little had changed, meeting friends and going through his enemy list, suggesting what terrible fates he had in store for them.

The Whelan Enemy No 1, Peter Mandelson, who resigned as Trade and Industry Secretary, will never return to front-rank politics if Brown's brusker can help it. And Mandelson, the first and greatest spin-doctor since that word arrived on these shores from America circa 1990, can hardly be expected to keep quiet if his foe keeps up the

attack. Neither can the Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, the Chancellor's longstanding antagonist.

Of course, there may be a short period of silence, although the first signs this week point in the opposite direction.

As he tours South Africa with Mr Blair, the Prime Minister's chief spin-doctor, Alastair Campbell, is making plans to bring the other practitioners to heel now that he has seen his desire to dump Whelan fulfilled — though months too late, thanks to Brown's obtuseness.

Campbell makes no apology for giving the Government his most favourable spin. How could he? Labour became acceptable to Middle England only because the spin-doctors reassured them that the party was "new" and unthreatening.

Whelan's greatest victory was to persuade every newspaper in the

land to carry friendly headlines on their reports of last year's Budget by playing to their own enthusiasms. But how can Downing Street stop the negative side of the spinner's art short of tapping press officers' phones and having them followed by private detectives.

Senior politicians are right to fear the power of the media to determine the pace and outcome of events. And they see their spin-doctors as a first line of defence in stopping unfavourable stories gaining a momentum of their own, classically displayed in the case of Peter Mandelson and his loan from the former Paymaster General Geoffrey Robinson.

But, more than that, spinning is in the very bloodstream of new Labour and cannot suddenly be stopped when bad blood between colleagues boils over.

We may not again see two practitioners in the moulds of Charlie Whelan and Peter Mandelson, but that hardly matters. They are of a breed that will not stop spinning even in their political graves.

## Party invitation is in the post

THE Labour Party has appointed a new direct marketing agency in an attempt to halt the slide in its membership. Marketing Week reports. The agency Bram London will spearhead the recruitment drive, with strategies that could include family membership and life membership deals. Thousands of members have deserted Labour since the 1997 election, with the total down to 390,000 from a high of 420,000. A few weeks ago the party dismissed its former agency because of a disagreement over strategy. The Conservatives, who are also trying to build membership and boost fundraising, have appointed an in-house marketing expert, Jane Keene.

THE former managing director of London Weekend Television, Eileen Gallagher, has been appointed to the board of Chris Evans's Ginger Media Group and will be responsible for its television interests, Broadcast reports.

She replaces Michael Foster, who left last September after a row over strategy. Ginger's chief executive, David Campbell, says that the company wants to develop television shows other than those in which Mr Evans appears, and several are in the pipeline. Ms Gallagher will remain a director of Shed Productions, an independent company that she set up with Brian Park and Ann McManus last year.

THREE stories in Marketing suggest that a concerted attempt is under way to persuade us to gamble more of our savings. Camelot, the National Lottery operator, is to relaunch its instant scratch cards next month, using the slogan "If you're game, we are". From a peak of £871 million in the six months after their launch in 1995, sales of the cards were down to £326 million in the first half of last year. Meanwhile, the National Bingo Gaming Association has hired a new agency to revamp its image, and bookmakers Coral Racing are seeking to develop interactive betting services on television.

CHANNEL 4's late-night youth show *The Word*, axed in 1995 after complaints that it was too raunchy, is to return in March, says a report in Broadcast. The independent

producer Planet 4 has been commissioned to produce ten half-hour episodes of the programme. They will include clips from previous series as well as new material. Terry Christian, one of the original presenters, will return to the show.

THE millennium bug will be one of the big public relations issues of the year, and PR Week analyses the problems it will bring. The Cabinet Office has appointed a ten-man heavy job of PR officers to make sure that people are neither complacent nor unduly alarmed. Adrià Roxan, the head of PR for the Audit Commission, threatens to shoo public officials into compliance. "Things are certainly going to go wrong," he warns. "Public irritation may be needed to bring some authorities up to scratch."

## TRADE

HANDLEBAR to handlebar conflict is imminent in the world of mountain bike magazines, according to the Press Gazette. Cabal Com-

munications has bought the ailing *Madman Mountain Bike* and plans to turn it into a direct rival of IPC's brand leader *Mountain Bike Rider*. The first shot in the battle was fired last summer when Cabal lured several former MBR journalists away from IPC, including Brant Richards, the former editor, who will now edit MMB. The editorial office will move from London to West Yorkshire and the first issue of the revamped title will appear next month.

CRYSTAL BALL gazers at Marketing Week have been trying to forecast consumer trends in the 21st century. Shops will change their displays several times a day "to suit the particular mood"; sophisticated computers will become part of the family; wearable electronic clothing will contain built-in mobile phones; anyone shall be shopping for nutrients — food with added health benefits. Small wonder that Ira Mathias, the chief executive of the Brad Pittures Group at Young and Rubicam, thinks that people will seek pleasures to all this change. He believes that ultramodern will become passé. "True luxury these days lies in the comfort of patina of the past."

MICHAEL LEAPMAN

## MEDIA & MARKETING

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The 28th Macallan International Bridge Pairs Championship, held in association with *The Times* and *The Sunday Times*, opens in London on Wednesday, January 20. Readers who buy tickets for this three-day event, featuring 32 of the world's best bridge players, have the chance to win a six-bottle case of The Macallan 10 Years Old Malt whisky, or one of six bottles in our prize draw.

The championship, with prizes worth £11,000, is regarded by many as the most prestigious in the bridge calendar. Among those taking part will be Omar Sharif, Bob Hamman, the world's highest-ranked player, the world senior pairs champions Boris Schapiro and Irving Gordon and top women's pair Sabine Auker and Daniela von Arnim. Bidding to become only the second pair to successfully defend their title will be the Norwegians Tor Helness and Geir Helgesen and for the first time a Chinese pair, Zhuang Zejun and Xu Hongjun, will take part in the tournament.

The Macallan International Bridge Pairs Championship will be staged at The White House Hotel, Albany Street, London NW1, on January 20, 21 and 22. To order tickets specify the session(s) you would like to attend and send a cheque, payable to The Macallan Distillers Ltd, with your details, including daytime telephone number, to: The Macallan Box Office, 31 Queen's Rd, London SW14 8PH. Enclose a sae. To enter the draw include your answer to this question: Who are the World Senior Pairs Champions? Applications must arrive by first post Wednesday, January 13, 1999.

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Omar Sharif and Boris Schapiro



The MACALLAN

CHANGINGTIMES

سكز (من الإعل)



BEER MILD AS IF





High-profile Radio 1 disc jockeys can turn a quirky tune from small-time music industry players into a smash hit, as Chris Moyles, left, did with Chef, and Zoë Ball achieved with *Tequila*, by the Bradford band Terrorvision, inset

Switch on any pop radio station over the next few days and you are likely to hear a chirpy little song, *Tequila*, by a rock band from Bradford called Terrorvision. The early success of the song — likely to zoom straight into the Top Ten on its release later this month — marks the second time in the past four weeks that Radio 1 has used its enormous power to "treasure" a hit.

Similarly, Chris Moyles, Radio 1's yobbish afternoon DJ (who many see as the next Chris Evans), had an enormous influence on the Christmas charts through tirelessly plugging *Chocolate Salty Balls* by Chef, a spin-off from the cult cartoon series *South Park*.

It seems that although most music industry pundits believe that

## DJs with Midas touch

In the post-Evans era, Radio 1 is finding it has not lost the power to influence record sales. Chris Ayres reports

Radio 1's influence has diminished over the years, it is still seen as the best platform from which to launch a new act. Moyles, for example, begged his audience to buy the record before Christmas and so prevent the Spice Girls from topping the charts. More than 500,000 copies of *Chocolate Salty Balls* were sold in just 14 days and, during the Christmas week, it became the biggest-selling record for 14 years, not actually to top the charts (reaching number two). The week after, it replaced the Spice Girls' *Goodbye* at number one.

Jason Reckham, a product manager at Sony's Columbia Records, says of *Chocolate Salty Balls*: "In America, the single was banned by the CBS network and we had no plans to release it as a single over

here. But once we had heard Chris Moyles play it on Radio 1 a few times we decided we could release it without it being banned. Of course, as soon as Radio 1 played it, all the wacky breakfast shows on independent local stations started playing it. It would have been the Christmas No 1 if we had got the stock out fast enough."

It must be something of a relief for Radio 1 to see its new star DJs finally building up the kind of power enjoyed by Chris Evans when he was at the station. Evans has seen his once-awesome influence over the music industry diminish while

at Virgin Radio. The other good news for the BBC is that the revitalised Radio 2 is now as likely to create hits as Radio 1. Recent chart success enjoyed by acts such as pop band The Corrs and veteran rockers Aerosmith — given hours of airplay on Radio 2 — is proof of that.

Earlier examples of Radio 1 DJs having the power to create hits can be found by turning to Mark and Lard, the duo who took over the breakfast show after Evans left. They were instrumental in breaking an obscure act called White Town by playing *Your Woman*. Similarly Pete Tong, a Radio 1 spe-

cialist DJ, was responsible for Underworld's *Born Slippy* charting. Radio 1 is understandably proud of its ability to make or break new acts, yet DJ endorsements are not always as straightforward as they appear. According to Simon Garfield, author of a book about Radio 1 called *The Nation's Favourite*, individual DJs are only occasionally allowed personally to choose records, with most of the station's play list decided by a committee of producers.

Alex Jones-Donnelly, a music scheduler at Radio 1, agrees: "In the case of Chef, Chris Moyles and his producer came across it and decid-

ed to play it. But we already had an awareness of it and gave them encouragement to play it." And Zoë Ball? She was "certainly part of that decision" to play *Tequila*.

However, it seems that in many cases Radio 1 allows its DJs to take sole credit for breaking records, even when the decision to play them has been made by a much larger group. DJs, of course, are keen to go along with this. Like Chris Evans, Zoë Ball and Chris Moyles realise that by associating themselves with certain records, they can manipulate their public image. It is no surprise, therefore, that Ball chose to endorse *Tequila* — a happy-go-lucky "indie" anthem about the joys of boozing — while Moyles chose *Chocolate Salty Balls* — a risqué spoof packed with

sexual innuendo. Jonathan King, the music industry pundit, says: "I think Chris Moyles and Zoë Ball are very wise to start backing songs. Most DJs have very little say at all over what gets played because most of them are brain-dead and have to be told what to do. But when they do have an influence, it can be enormous."

Record companies recognise this power and often bring forward release dates (*Tequila*, for example) after a DJ's endorsement. "The best record companies will realise that having a DJ on-side is a major advantage," says King, "and if they have any sense they will give credit in the DJ to boost his or her ego."

This raises questions about Radio 1's place in an increasingly commercial industry. Garfield says: "There is a very interesting relationship between a publicly funded broadcaster such as Radio 1 and the commercial world because they still have the power to launch a career and make millions of pounds for a record company. But I think they are aware of that responsibility."

## Football's biggest battle kicks off

At 10.30am on Tuesday, one of the most significant television football contests for years kicks off in Court 21 in Chichester Rents, off Chancery Lane in central London — the court where the sons of Robert Maxwell were tried.

This time the multimillion-pound battle is between the English Premier League and the Office of Fair Trading (OFT), which has asked the Restrictive Practices Court to decide whether the league's exclusive television rights deals — with broadcasters are the work of a cartel operating against the public interest. Unless a last-minute deal is brokered, and so far there is no sign of one, the case is likely to last four months; an appeal on a point of law could see it run deep into the 1999/2000 football season.

At the heart of the issue is the £670 million deal between the Premier League and BSkyB for coverage of exclusive live games and the BBC's £73 million payment for broadcast highlights on *Match of the Day*. Apart from the cost — the Premier League estimates that its legal bill alone could reach £7.5 million — the implications of the case are enormous for how all major sports appear on television.

**John Goodbody and Ray Snoddy on the court case about to begin over TV rights**

The Premier League is even worried that if the court rules that it cannot negotiate television rights collectively, it could lead to a break-up of the league, with the big clubs such as Manchester United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Tottenham Hotspur leading a breakaway in search of the best television deals.

John Bridgeman, the Director-General of Fair Trading, believes that by selling its rights collectively and exclusively to the highest bidder on behalf of its members, the league is acting as a cartel.

"The net effect of cartels is to inflate costs and prices," he argues. "Any other business acting in this way would be subject to competition law and I see no reason why the selling of sport should be treated differently."

The OFT believes that the deal with BSkyB, in which News International, parent group of *The*

*Times*, has a 40 per cent stake, artificially restricts the number of games that football fans can see on television. The deal allows 60 of the 380 Premier League games each season to be shown live. The competition body argues that viewers would like the opportunity to see more football and that the market should be allowed to decide the number of games shown and at what price.

OFT officials, who talk of "when we win" rather than "if", insist they are acting on behalf of the consumer and deny that there would be chaos if individual clubs were required to negotiate their own television deals. David Elstein, chief executive of Channel 5, who is appearing as an expert witness for the Premier League, disagrees and will give a warning that broadcasters do not want to buy individual matches. "Football would suffer a major loss of revenue if the OFT wins," he will argue.

Mr Elstein believes that BSkyB would then buy up the rights to the top 12 clubs at a lower price than the current market value — and that not many would be interested in becoming "second-best broadcasters" by buying up the rights to clubs such as Coventry and Southampton. As an insur-

ance policy, BSkyB is trying to buy Manchester United for £623 million — a takeover now being investigated by the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

On the other side, Michael Grade, former chief executive of Channel 4, will give evidence as an expert witness on just how valuable football is to television, while Richard Horwood, head of Mirror Television, has been subpoenaed by the OFT to tell of his unsuccessful bid, with Carlton Communications, for the Premier League rights.

Mr Horwood would clearly be interested in buying smaller packages of rights if they became available at the right price, as



The Premier League fears a new TV deal could see big clubs such as Arsenal and Spurs break away

almost certainly would Lord Hollick, chief executive of United News & Media, another unsuccessful bidder last time.

The position of Carlton is particularly tricky. As a 50 per cent owner of ONdigital, the digital terrestrial television group, the company depends heavily on its deal to broadcast Sky Sports — including all the live Premier League games — to get its new venture off the ground.

Michael Green, chairman of Carlton, also wants access to his own football rights, and may square the circle by supporting the current Premier League-BSkyB deal, which lasts until 2001. He could then argue that

the system should be opened up after that.

Ronically the Premier League, which regards Tuesday's case as backward-looking and a waste of time and money, wants to be on every broadcasting platform, including free-to-air television, after 2001. "We will try to get the right pieces in the right place to create a coherent whole," says Peter Leaver, the league chief executive. By then pay-per-view football will almost certainly be available on digital television, which should enable the market to decide how much fans are prepared to pay to watch, at the very least, the away games of their favourite teams.

What if no one had wanted a Big Mac, even for free?

AD INDUSTRY insiders will know that McDonald's was simply a victim of the curse of *Campaign*, wherein an accolade from the industry magazine is as threatening to your business as an "at home" spread in *Hello!* is to celebrity marriages.

McDonald's was this week announced as *Campaign's* 1998 Advertiser of the Year, in recognition of its sophisticated approach to branding and promotions, and the huge improvement in the quality of its UK ads since the days of Ronald McDonald. The burger giant has managed to turn successive short-term price promotions into an ongoing brand campaign. It also won last year's World Cup advertising battle, and consistently outsmarted Burger King.

Others now similarly cursed include BNP DDB, New PHD and the Volkswagen Polo — voted Agency of the Year, Media Agency of the Year, and Campaign of the Year respectively.

Stefano Hatfield is the Editor of *Campaign*

## Praying for a revolution

**CHE GUEVARA**, an Argentinian Marxist, might seem an odd choice to represent Jesus Christ in the latest controversial ad campaign from Christians in Media, a group of media professional volunteers working under the auspices of the Churches Advertising Network (CAN), an ecumenical group made up of representatives from the mainstream churches.

But in the group's Easter ad campaign, Che does indeed appear as Christ, together with the pithy strapline: "Meek Mild As If. Discover the real Jesus. Church. April 4."

Inevitably, the campaign has split the Church. Some clergymen and churchgoing politicians have condemned it, with reactions varying from "bad taste" to "sacrilegious". The CAN has defended the poster as an attempt to prove that Jesus was not a wimp, and has denied using shock tactics.

This last claim is a tad disingenuous. True, Guevara and the popular image of Christ share long, dark hair and intense eyes, but you cannot hope to portray Christ as a communist revolutionary and not upset people.

The entirely defensible truth is that the CAN wanted to create ads that got noticed and to engender media coverage in this continuing slack week. As such, it has worked.

just the group's controversial effort in 1996 describing the Virgin Mary's "bad hair day" worked. But it all seems a little desperate — almost a tacit admission that Easter has been lost to the chocolate and fluffy chick manufacturers.

And perhaps it has. Christians attempting to reverse falling church numbers appear to be an easy media target, damned if they do something, damned if they don't.

We will only know whether the campaign worked after Easter. Personally, I am not sure whether advertising can drag people up aisles other than those in supermarkets. The Church appears to be in greater need of a long-term PR campaign aimed at the disaffected young. We should not knock the well-intentioned creators of the Christ-as-Che campaign for trying. But might they be trying too hard?

**THE** McDonald's birthday offer of two big Macs for the price of one was also well-intentioned, designed as it was to celebrate the chain's 25th anniversary in the UK. It also fell victim to the slack

news week. Reporters on their first day back at the office pounced on a gift story — that demand had outstripped supply. Unusually, it had already appeared in some papers on Monday before *The Sun* and the *Daily Star* splashed with it on Tuesday (curiously, *The Mirror* gave it three paragraphs on page 17).

The *Daily Star's* report of chaos in the high streets was typical of the embellishments that McDonald's had to endure. But although the chain was embarrassed, it was nothing like as bad as a gaffe as the Hoover free flights debacle with which it has been compared.

Once the bungle had been revealed, McDonald's, in stark contrast to Hoover, moved with alacrity to take public apologies in the papers and to move to its next celebratory price promotion: half-price cheeseburgers.

Although I am surprised that a marketer as sophisticated as McDonald's could so underestimate demand (did it forget that children were still on holiday, or that the greedy British public will do anything for a freebie?), it recovered

well. Used to dealing with negative publicity, McDonald's will know that this past week could have been worse.

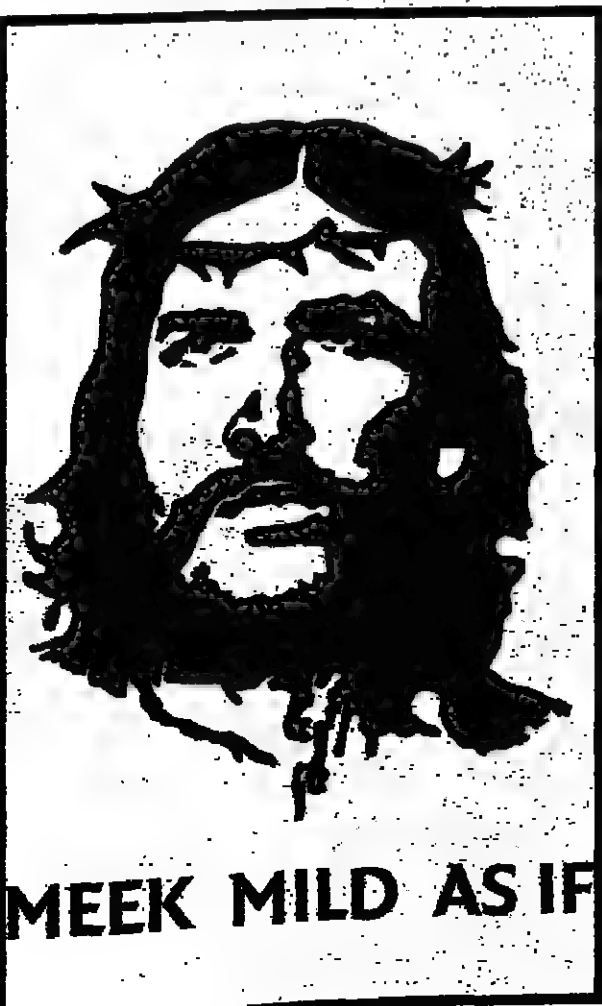
What if no one had wanted a Big Mac, even for free?

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Christ as Che: no shock tactic, say campaign organisers

## BBC pays price for library sale

IN A striking example of dramatic irony, the BBC has been forced to hire back part of the valuable photographic library it sold off for a song to make a drama about a valuable photographic library threatened with the scrapheap.

The three-part BBC2 serial *Shooting the Past*, which begins on Sunday, stars Timothy Spall, Lindsay Duncan, Billie Whitelaw and Emilia Fox as a group of archivists trying to save a picture collection. "It struck me as extraordinary that the BBC should have to hire back what it once owned," says the drama's author, the playwright Stephen Poliakoff, who was inspired to write *Shooting the Past* after hearing about the knock-down sale of another picture library, from the EMI-owned Borehamwood Studios, to the Star Wars producer George Lucas in the late Eighties.

Though neither the Hulton Getty picture library nor the BBC will disclose the hire fees being charged, it would cost the average film-maker £60,000-£70,000 to borrow the 4,000 images used in the series.

The collection was founded in 1938 by Edward Hulton, the publisher of *Picture Post* magazine. Twenty years later it was snapped up by the BBC for a bargain £100. Then, in 1988, the corporation sold it to the cable TV entrepreneur Brian Deutsch for £1.5 million.

Deutsch sold the library on for £10 million to a group of private investors and, in 1996, Mark Getty, grandson of the oil billionaire John Paul, purchased it for £30 million for his company Getty Images. His major rival for control of the so-called visual content industry is Microsoft's Bill Gates, who has been buying up the rights to images throughout the world.

Thanks to the expansion of the Internet and Millennium fever, the value of stock libraries has rocketed, with the Hulton Getty worth tens of millions of pounds. It is the UK's biggest picture library with a global turnover of £4 million a year. "The BBC sold off its heritage when everything was being hived off to indie programme-makers," says Matthew Busson, the Hulton Getty's general manager. "The picture library didn't fit into the BBC's corporate plan in 1988 and they wanted the storage space; the accountants were so short-sighted."

*Shooting the Past* was made for the BBC by the independent production company Talkback, which hired the Hulton photographs. According to a BBC spokeswoman, the bulk of the photographs used in *Shooting the Past* were not from the BBC collection but had been acquired more recently by the Hulton Getty.

The corporation is not alone in selling its heritage for a mess of pottage. Over the past two decades many newspapers and magazines have been indulging in an orgy of stock-shedding. "Vogue binned original prints by the fashion photographer Yousuf Karsh that now fetch £5,000-£7,000 each," says Busson. And the BBC acquired the *Evening Standard* and *Express* picture libraries in 1984, incorporating them into the Hulton.

The industry's loss has become Getty's gain, enabling this farsighted entrepreneur to emerge as a major media player.

MAUREN PATON

Shooting the Past will start on Sunday, January 10, at 10.10pm on BBC2.



# 'I have the power'

Saatchi & Saatchi's new boy has big ideas, says Michele Martin

David Droga is remarkably chipper considering the kind of few weeks he has had. Before Christmas he moved from Singapore to London, took up one of the biggest jobs in British advertising at the age of 30, and dealt with a dollop of office politics to boot.

The position is executive creative director of Saatchi & Saatchi, one of the world's most famous ad agencies, while the office politics came courtesy of some of the people he has to oversee.

One of Saatchi's existing joint executive creative directors, Adam Kean, is now leaving the agency, although he will continue to work on individual projects. The fact that Saatchi's is prepared to lose one of its most senior staff — Kean came 17th in *The Observer's* list of the UK's 300 most important people — says a lot about the importance the company places on Droga.

Although the youngest creative director in London and the only non-Brit running such a big department, he is a realist. "If things were perfect here, they wouldn't have brought me in to change things," he says. "And you won't meet anyone more competitive than me. I was one of five boys in my family, so I know what you need to do to make noise and grab attention."

After nearly four years stabilising the business since the departure of the founding Saatchi brothers, the agency

feels it is time to stick its head above the parapet. The story of what has happened since Charles and Maurice left, taking seven senior managers with them, is not one of business failure — in financial terms, the company has done better than most people predicted. In 1997, billings were back at 1995 levels of £260 million after a 14 per cent fall.

But 1998 was not perfect — despite gains, there have been account losses, from Procter & Gamble's £75 million media buying to the National Lottery's £17 million business and the £8 million European Schweppes business.

The main weakness has been creative. In its heyday, Saatchi's per-

suaded beer drinkers that "Australians wouldn't give a XXXX for anything but Castlemaine, and helped to elect the Tories in 1979 with posters saying: "Labour isn't working." Today, too few of its ads are memorable. And some, such as the Visa ads, with Mel Smith "making cash a Kerching of the past", have been the butt of jokes. Industry insiders say Saatchi's has missed having a proper creative figurehead since Charles Saatchi left.

Enter Droga, the man expected to fill that role. Small, dark and charismatic, the new kid on the block has a track record which indicates that he may be able to inject some pizzazz. He joins from Saatchi's office in Singapore, where he was regional creative director in Asia. He is credited with turning it into a hotshop which



The adman cometh: David Droga, the new executive creative director of Saatchi & Saatchi

won Advertising Age's Agency of the Year award in 1998. It also increased its billings by 45 per cent under him, despite the region's economic slump.

Droga describes his style of advertising as "looking for the simple, big idea" and says: "I'm here to push us further than we've ever been."

He stops short of saying that there will be redundancies, but admits that half of the creative department changed during his time in Singapore. Droga adds: "There will be a period of three to six months where I'll be reviewing things. I'll give everyone a chance to perform but if they don't, I'll bring in new people."

He will need every ounce of his bullishness. So far, the agency's lost clients have been balanced by wins that have included the £19 million Lloyds TSB business and work from existing clients. Such gains have helped to keep Saatchi's

creative reputation in the City at a higher level than it is in adland, even though its share price fell from a high of £1.85 this year to about £1.32 now.

Paul Richards, an analyst with WestLB Panmure, explains: "Saatchi's still has a reputation for creativity, but it's not the hotshop it once was."

Droga was born in Thredbo, an Australian ski resort in New South Wales, and his decision to go into advertising went against the family tradition of Cambridge followed by jobs in "things like finance". On hearing his decision, his enraged father said: "Son, you have really blown it this time."

He quickly proved his father wrong. In 1992, aged just 23, he was given a 25 per cent stake in one of Australia's trendiest agencies, OMON, after he helped to make it the country's fastest-growing shop. He sold his share three years later after "getting rest-

less" and took the job in Singapore. In between, he has managed to pursue his passion for skiing and to marry an American former ballerina.

On arriving in Singapore, Droga moved Saatchi's out of the skyscraper it inhabited and relocated to a converted music club. His ads are similarly unconventional. One, for hair dye, had a woman looking as if she was slitting her wrists. On closer inspection, the "blood" turned out to be colorant. Droga's reasoning was that women change their hair when they are unhappy. The ad hugely increased sales.

Significantly, his remit stretches beyond the creative department into account management and planning. "My loyalty is to the creative product but if that's being pulled apart from outside sources, I'll address that. I have a mandate, and with a mandate comes power," he says.

## Hit them hard and hit them often

The ITV companies may have struck it rich already with Chris Tarrant's *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* but even more significant financial news is on the way for them. Research about to be published takes us closer than ever before to the holy grail of the advertising and marketing world — the knowledge of how television ads drive consumer purchases.

The findings by tvSPAN, a joint venture between the market research group Taylor Nelson Sofres and the sales house TSMS, demonstrates that advertising in the ITV peak-time schedule is at least four times as effective in driving sales of supermarket goods as the average performance of all television ads.

The research also challenges the conventional view that the best way to develop such brands is to drip-feed ads, say once a week, during a campaign.

This is the approach of the advertising guru John Philip Jones of Syracuse University, the author of *When Ads Work*, who virtually adopted "once is enough" as his industry catchphrase.

Instead, according to Sue Moseley, TSMS's strategic planning director, the message should be to "tell them once, then tell them again quickly". To get consumers buying your brands, you have to zap them with several sightings of your ad, ideally the day before they go to the supermarket. If people see an ad three times on the day before they shop, there is a 50 per cent increase in sales.

This implies that, despite the fragmentation of audiences in the digital world, and even if ITV fails to meet its target of 40 per cent of peak-time viewing by 2000, ITV companies will continue to rake in money. Advertisers, if they believe the research, will have to fight their way into the ITV prime-time slots — and greater frequency will cost them.

A suspicious mind will note, of course, that TSMS is a company that sells ITV air-

time and is also a subsidiary of United News and Media, holder of three ITV franchises. But Taylor Nelson Sofres is there to see fair play, and Andrew Roberts, its technical director, says that he has no axe to grind.

The research is powerful because it links purchasing directly with programming. The bar codes of all supermarket purchases by 10,000 families are fed into a database. In the Meridian ITV area, meters have been attached to all the television sets in 750 homes to monitor which channels they are tuned to.

After two years, tvSPAN has amassed a great deal of data and is increasingly confident in its predictions, which fit neatly with research on memory and message retention.

Reinforcement of an advertising message within a relatively short time also seems to improve longer-term response. Three exposures to an ad in one day still have double the effect on sales over a month than do three sightings over the whole four weeks.

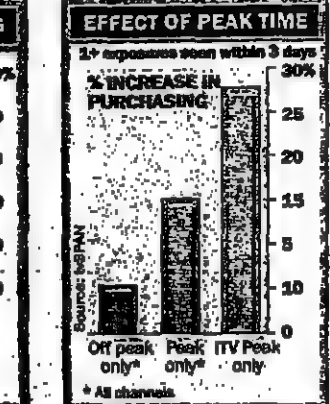
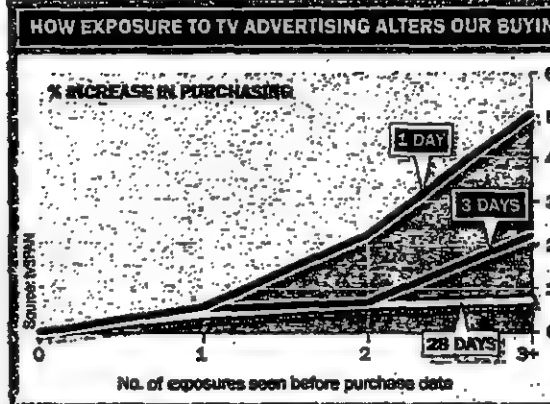
The power of concentrated exposure to ads seems to be greatest when those ads are shown at peak times on ITV. Several previous studies have proved the link between awareness of advertising and attention paid to programmes. If a viewer is interested in a programme, he or she is more likely to have noticed and absorbed an accompanying ad.

The tvSPAN team believes it has confirmed this link through ITV's ability to generate more sales at peak times. This works well with grocery sales because women tend to pay more attention than men to soaps, dramas and popular documentaries.

Now media planners in ad agencies will have to look at how a campaign is progressing at two or three-day intervals rather than waiting until it has ended. The research also calls into question such simplistic advertising measures as cost-per-thousand. And it should mean trebles all round for ITV in 1999.



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## Valuation time runs from exchange

Byrne and Another v Hall  
Pain & Foster (a firm) and  
Another

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown,  
Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice  
Schiemann

[Judgment December 11]

The date of accrual of the cause of action in a claim for damages for professional negligence brought by a purchaser of property against a firm of valuers, for the purposes of the Limitation Act 1980, was the date when contracts were exchanged.

The Court of Appeal so stated, dismissing an appeal by the plaintiff purchasers, Marvin Byrne and Joanne Elizabeth Byrne, from the decision of Mr Justice Laws dated April 7, 1998 whereby he struck out their claim for damages for professional negligence against the defendant firm of valuers, Hall Pain & Foster, on the ground that the claim was statute-barred under section 2 of the 1980 Act. The writ was issued more than six years after contracts were exchanged but less than six years after completion.

It was alleged that the purchasers had exchanged contracts on a flat in Portsmouth relying on a valuation report written by the second defendant, a chartered surveyor employed by the first defendant firm. The report had been commissioned from the firm by the building society from whom the purchasers were taking a mortgage. After completion, defects came to light which the purchasers alleged should have been described in the report but were not.

Mr Paul McCormick for the purchasers; Mr Andrew Parsons for the valuers.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the question raised was whether the cause of ac-

tion accrued when contracts were exchanged or when the purchase was completed. It was surprising that the point had not previously been decided. While both sides could point to various dicta suggesting one conclusion rather than the other, neither could point to a case where the distinction between exchange and completion was, as in the present case, decisive.

It was suggested that two decisions of the House of Lords contained important conflicting dicta on the point.

First, *Smith v Bush* [1990] AC 831 which was the case which established the potential liability in tort of the mortgagees' valuers to the purchaser, the foundation of the plaintiffs' claim in the present action, and Mr Parsons submitted that Lord Templeman (at p852) could be seen pointing to exchange rather than completion as the stage when the cause of action arose.

Not so, Mr McCormick argued. Lord Templeman was there using the term "contracts to buy" as an omnibus expression encompassing either exchange or completion. It mattered not which it was: what mattered was that a duty of care should be held to exist because of the purchasers' likely reliance on the mortgage lenders' valuation.

His Lordship accepted Mr McCormick's submission. Essentially the case was concerned with the duty of care rather than damage. It was not directed to the question of when, as between exchange and completion, damage was first sustained.

The second House of Lords decision was the authority on which Mr McCormick principally relied, *Nykredit plc v Edward Erdman Ltd* [1997] 1 WLR 1627, and in particular the speech of Lord Nicholls of Birkenhead at p1630.

There, Mr McCormick submitted, Lord Nicholls was addressing the question as to when damage was first sustained by a purchaser so that his cause of action in tort accrued against the negligent valuer, and his answer was "when he completes the purchase", which was when he "suffers actual damage by paying with his money".

That was the high-water mark of the plaintiffs' argument. Completion rather than exchange was the concept three times referred to by Lord Nicholls at that passage.

In his Lordship's judgment, the argument failed. For the purposes of Lord Nicholls' illustration in *Nykredit* it mattered not whether time ran from completion or exchange.

The issue in *Nykredit* was when the plaintiff bank's cause of action had arisen, and the decision was that it arose when a relevant and measurable loss had first been revealed. There, since the borrower had defaulted at once and the amount lent had at all times exceeded the value of the property, that had been at or about the time of the loan transaction.

The critical point to note, however, was that the action there was by a lender complaining that in reliance on the defendant's negligence he had made a bad loan, whereas the present action was by a purchaser the essence of whose complaint was that he bought a bad property.

Because it was altogether less certain whether and when loss would be suffered by badly advised lenders than in the case of badly advised purchasers, the cases were treated differently.

The central point which his Lordship apprehended was being made in Lord Nicholls' illustration of the house purchaser in *Nykredit* was

that the purchaser was on any view damaged by purchasing in reliance upon a negligent overvaluation. But for that he would not have bought. No more would he have exchanged contracts to buy: he suffered actual damage by parting with his money and receiving in exchange property worth less than the price he paid.

But his Lordship could see no distinction in principle between parting with his money and receiving in exchange property at completion and, as would generally occur on exchange, paying a deposit and becoming committed to pay the balance on completion.

True, it was not until completion that the purchaser received the property in the sense of the legal estate in the property. On exchange, however, he obtained a very real interest in the property and, for example, had to insure it.

In the last analysis *Nykredit*, to his Lordship's mind assisted the defendants' argument rather than the plaintiffs'. One looked, therefore, for any derivative liability or measure of damage applicable to the wrong in question.

In the present case, his Lordship repeated, the plaintiffs on exchange became irrevocably committed to acquiring the lease, a lease worth less than they reasonably believed, and one which they would not have committed themselves to acquire but for the defendants' negligent report.

That, as it seemed to his Lordship, plainly resulted in actual, as opposed to potential or prospective loss or damage of a kind recog-

nised by the law. In his Lordship's judgment, it was no answer to say that not every exchange resulted in completion so that the plaintiffs might perhaps, in the event, have escaped from their commitment without loss.

The fact was that they did not do so and there was no reason to suppose that they would.

Nor did it seem to his Lordship any answer to say that property prices could have increased between exchange and completion sufficiently to outweigh the depreciating effect of the unrevealed defect.

Mr McCormick submitted that the loss crystallised only at completion and it was the market value of the property at that date that one must compare with the price paid. His Lordship saw no good reason why, by the same token, that he would ignore any movement in the property market after completion, his Lordship would ignore it after exchange.

The valuation in the report would necessarily relate more closely to that of the property at exchange than at completion. By exchange, the purchase price would be fixed and agreed and by its completion to the transaction at exchange the purchaser would effectively have locked himself into the property market at that point.

For the reasons given, which in substance were the same as those given by the judge below, his Lordship too would hold that the cause of action in cases like the present accrued when contracts were exchanged.

Lord Justice Otton gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Schiemann agreed with both.

Solicitors: Anderson & Co, Portsmouth; Grindleys, Stoke-on-Trent.

Wadey v Surrey County Council

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown,  
Lord Justice Otton and Lord Justice  
Schiemann

[Judgment December 11]

When calculating interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in a personal injuries claim, the court should disregard state benefits received by the plaintiff as a result of the accident.

The Court of Appeal so stated allowing a cross-appeal by the plaintiff, John Wadey, from the decision dated April 1, 1998 of Judge Simpson sitting at the Mayor's and City of London Court.

The judge had awarded him damages of £224,049.81 in respect of personal injury, loss and damage suffered as a result of injuries sustained in the course of his employment with the defendants, Surrey County Council, as a firefighter. The main appeal, by the defendant, sought to impugn the judge's finding on liability had been compromised.

Mr Edward Bishop for the defendants; Mr Charles Pugh for the plaintiff.

LORD JUSTICE OTTON said that the substantive issue arose on the cross-appeal as to whether or not interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in an action for personal injuries should be calculated after deduction of all or some of the state benefits received by the plaintiff as a result of the accident.

That was an issue of considerable importance and arose out of the Social Security (Recovery of Benefits) Act 1997.

Included in the award of

£224,049.81 was the sum of £49,197.20, representing the benefits the plaintiff had received over a five-year period. In assessing the interest on special damages, of approximately £87,000, those benefits were deducted before calculation. Had they not been, the plaintiff's award would have been increased by nearly £10,000.

The question was whether the enactment of section 17 of the 1997 Act, and the repeal without replacement of section 103 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 meant that the law had now reverted to the common law position which would mean the deduction of benefits from the damages and interest calculation; or that it replaced the position of the Social Security Act 1999, as variously amended, of disregarding benefits for the purposes of damages but not interest; or whether the new legislation heralded a new approach to the issue altogether.

To his Lordship's mind, the scheme of the 1997 Act was clear and straightforward and led to only one conclusion. Not only should benefits be disregarded from the assessment of damages, but also from the assessment of interest.

His Lordship had come to that conclusion primarily because of the absence of a provision similar to section 103 in the new Act, coupled with the unambiguous direction in 17 with its unambiguous direction as to the treatment of benefits in relation to damages.

The 1997 Act was not meant as a piecemeal amendment to the existing law, but was redrafted in its entirety, fitting with Parliament's intention of setting up a new scheme.

The omission of a provision such as section 103 could not, therefore, have been unintentional.

If Parliament had wished to carry over the provision on interest from the earlier Act, it seems obvious that they would have done so. Yet they did not.

In coming to that conclusion his Lordship had drawn valuable assistance from the decision of the Inner House of the Court of Session: see *Wise v John Fulton (Plumbers) Ltd* (1998 SLT 1026).

Their Lordships there had occasion to consider the exact same question which was now before the court, the Outer House having given conflicting answers to the question of whether benefits paid should be deducted from the assessment of interest.

In reaching his conclusion his Lordship had also taken into consideration the general principle that on points of statutory construction which extended to both countries.

English and Scots law should be uniform, in order to avoid the same Act giving rise to one result in Scotland and another in England. There was no compelling reason not to adopt the Scottish decision in what was a thoughtful and careful judgment and a sensible conclusion.

For these reasons his Lordship would hold that, in future, courts should disregard benefits received when calculating interest on a plaintiff's damages for past losses in personal injuries actions.

Lord Justice Simon Brown gave a concurring judgment and Lord Justice Schiemann agreed.

Solicitors: Vizards Lawford & Co.

## Will validly sealed after testator's death

In re Hughes, deceased

Before Judge Weeks, QC

[Judgment December 3]

Section 97(1)(c) of the Mental Health Act 1983, which required a statutory will to be sealed by the Court of Protection before probate could be granted, did not require the will to have been so sealed during the lifetime of the testator.

Judge Weeks, QC, sitting as an additional judge of the Chancery Division, so held following the appeal of Mr Frederick Hughes, the person entitled to benefit under a statutory will executed on May 16, 1997, from the refusal by Mr Registrar Yealham of the Probate Registry of Wales on August 4, 1998 to admit to probate the said statutory will of Beatrice Maude Hughes, deceased.

Miss Sara Hargreaves for Mr Hughes; Mr Gilead Cooper for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution and the Morrison Heart Research Fund, both entitled under the terms of the testator's previous will.

HIS LORDSHIP said that in 1981 the testator had made a will leaving her estate to her daughter with a gift over to the respondent charities. The testator's daughter predeceased her on May 2, 1985 after which the testator's mental health declined. Her son, Frederick Hughes, was appointed as her receiver pursuant to the terms of the 1983 Act.

On April 17, 1997 Mr Hughes applied to the Court of Protection for the execution of a statutory will in his favour, the draft of which was duly amended and approved by Master Prime.

A will in those terms was executed by Mr Hughes's solicitor and sent to the Court of Protection to be sealed on May 16, only to be returned to Mr Hughes's solicitor on May 19 because the solicitor had forgotten to sign the document certifying that the will was an exact copy of the draft settled and approved by the court.

On the same day the testator died. Unaware of the death of the testator the solicitors returned a certified copy of the statutory will to the Court of Protection on May 22, which was sealed by the Court of Protection on May 27.

The sole basis on which the deputy registrar refused to admit the statutory will to probate was that it had been sealed by the Court of Protection only after the testator had already died.

The deputy registrar's reasoning, based as it was on an analogy drawn from section 9 of the Wills Act 1837 was expressly disapproved by section 97(2) of the 1983 Act. His Lordship rejected Mr Cooper's alternative submission that the jurisdiction of the Court of Protection ceased on the death of the testator, and that sealing this statutory will on May 27 could not divest the executors under the prior will.

It was clear from rule 93 of the Court of Protection Rules (SI 1994 No 3040) that the purpose of sealing the statutory will was evidential.

It was not, as Mr Cooper had contended, analogous to a testator reading his own will before execution in order to check that it conformed to the draft, as at that stage the testator was under no obligation to execute the will in those terms.

In the case of a statutory will the Court of Protection had already decided on the contents of the will. In sealing, the Court of Protection performed the purely ministerial function of ensuring that the statutory will so executed conformed to its authorisation, and that could be carried out equally well before or after the death of the patient.

Section 97(1) of the 1983 Act laid down the formal requirements of a valid statutory will. There was no express requirement that the Court of Protection seal the will during the patient's lifetime and no sensible reason to imply any such arbitrary rule into the statute.

Solicitors: Peter Williams & Co, Swansea; Trevalions, Poole and Bevan Ashford, Cardiff.

## No additive remedy after court hearing

Regina v Commissioner for Local Administration, Ex parte H (a Minor)

Before Mr Justice Turner

[Judgment December 21]

The Commissioner for Local Administration had no jurisdiction to investigate a complaint where the matter complained of had already been determined by the courts.

Mr Justice Turner so held in the Queen's Bench Division when dismissing an application for judicial review brought by H, a minor, by his mother and next friend, of the decision of Mr Commissioner White dated July 15, 1997 whereby he refused to investigate the applicant's complaint that Staffordshire County Council had failed to provide him with an appropriate education, seeking:

(i) an order of mandamus requiring the commissioner to investigate the applicant's complaint that the council had failed to provide him with an appropriate education between September 1994 and January 1997, and

(ii) declarations that where a complaint was made of maladministration in respect of which no remedy was available in judicial review proceedings, section 26(6)(c) of the Local Government Act 1974 provided no impediment to an investigation by the commissioner or, alternatively that the commissioner had a discretion to deal with complaints even where the subject matter of the complaint had been raised in previous judicial review proceedings.

Mr Richard Gordon, QC and Mr Ian Wise for H; Mr Brian Ash, QC and Mr John Hobson for the commissioner.

MR JUSTICE TURNER said that in previous judicial review proceedings in December 1996 Mr Justice Johnson had ordered that the applicant's special educational needs be assessed promptly by Staffordshire County Council and speedy consideration given to all appropriate options for his future education.

The present application, brought in August 1997, was, in essence an attempt to be compensated in the future for the loss of the education which had led to the making of that December order.

The main thrust of the applicant's argument was that the commissioner had a discretion to deal with the complaint because, although the subject matter had been raised in other proceedings, the circumstances in which it could have been obtained in those proceedings had not included any remedy in respect

of past maladministration and that therefore section 26(6) of the Local Government Act 1974 did not provide a bar to an investigation by the commissioner.

That subsection stated: "A local commissioner shall not conduct an investigation under this Part of the Act in respect of ... (c) any action in respect of which the person aggrieved has or had a remedy by way of proceedings in any court of law".

Dica of Lord Denning, Master of the Rolls, in *R v Local Commissioner for Administration for the North and East Area of England, Ex parte Bradford Metropolitan City Council* [1979] QB 287, 300 and of Lord Justice Woolf in *R v Commissioner for Local Administration, Ex parte Croydon London Borough Council* [1989] 1 All ER 1033, 1038 were cited in support.

Rejecting the applicant's argument, his Lordship said that on the proper construction of section 26(6) of the Local Government Act 1974 the commissioner was not concerned with remedies but, as section 26(1) of the 1974 Act made plain, with "action taken by a local authority ... in exercise of its administrative functions".

Furthermore, both the *Bradford* and *Croydon* cases made it clear that the commissioner should not

trespass on any area in which the courts had jurisdiction except in cases to which the section 26(6) proviso applied, namely:

"Provided that a local commissioner may conduct an investigation notwithstanding the existence of a right or remedy if satisfied that in the particular circumstances it is not reasonable to expect the person aggrieved to resort or have resorted to it."

Finally, it was plain that the intention underlying the 1974 Act was to provide redress in respect of maladministration by a local authority in exercise of its administrative powers for those who were unable to get such redress in any other way.

The essential feature of the legislation was the creation of a legal right to complain about a grievance in respect of which there had been no available form of redress whether through the common law or by means of judicial review.

Where a party had ventilated a grievance by means of judicial review it was not conceivable that they should enjoy an alternative, let alone an additive, right by way of complaint to a local government commissioner.

Solicitors: Coningsby, Croydon; Pulvers, Watford.

## Judicial review not available

Regina v Winchester Crown Court, Ex parte B (a Minor)

Before Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Astill

[Judgment December 10]

Lifting reporting restrictions on naming a convicted criminal aged 14 was an exercise of the crown court's powers in relation to proceedings on indictment and accordingly there was no jurisdiction to entertain an application for judicial review of that decision.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court so held when dismissing an application by B, a minor aged 14, for judicial review of the decision of Judge Tucker, QC, to revoke the order that he had made to protect B's identity under section 39(1) of the Children and Young Persons Act 1933 after his conviction by a jury at Winchester Crown Court on June 16, 1998 for an offence contrary to section 1 of the Criminal Attempts Act 1981.

Mr Mark Kelly for B; Mr John Howell, QC, for the respondent.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON

BROWN said that Judge Tucker having sentenced B to three years' detention to the authorities, considered that a section 39 order was a general measure for the protection of young persons and that the power to make such an order was wholly collateral to the trial on indictment.

He was satisfied that none of the points identified in the following House of Lords decisions was met: the conduct of the trial was not affected, *In re Smalley* [1985] AC 622; it was not an integral part of the trial process, *In re Simpson* [1987] 1 WLR 194; nor did it arise in the issue between the Crown and the defendant, *R v Manchester Crown Court, Ex parte DPP* [1993] 1 WLR 1524. Accordingly the decision of a trial judge to make or decline to make such an order was amenable to judicial review.

Furthermore, in *R v Lee* [1993] 1 WLR 1038 and *R v Leicester Crown Court, Ex parte S (a Minor)* [1993] 1 WLR 1111, both cases involving the discharge of a section 39 order, the Divisional Court had accepted jurisdiction to entertain a judicial review application.

In *R v Cardiff Crown Court, Ex parte M (a Minor)* [The Times

April 28, 1998], Mr Justice Sullivan, having given the fullest consideration to the authorities, considered that a section 39 order was a general measure for the protection of young persons and that the power to make such an order was wholly collateral to the trial on indictment.

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However, none of that line of authorities including *Ex parte S* had considered the important case of *R v Central Criminal Court, Ex parte Crook* [The Times November 8, 1984] where the making of an order under section 11 of the Contempt of Court Act 1981 prohibiting the identification of a witness had been held to be within the meaning of section 29(3) of the 1981 Act as intending to influence the conduct of a trial on indictment and that therefore there was no jurisdiction for judicial review.

Rejecting the submission that orders pursuant to section 39 of the 1933 Act were a separate child protection power and not analogous to orders under section 11 of the 1981 Act, his Lordship said that in his view section 39 orders were integral to the administration of justice and not merely collateral to the proceedings so that section 29(3) of the Supreme Court Act 1981 deprived the Divisional Court of jurisdiction.

Mr Justice Astill agreed.

Solicitors: Ranson Houghton, Andover; Treasury Solicitor.

## Father wins order

In re K (Minor) (Residence order)

Where a mother was untrustworthy and there was a danger that if she was given leave to take her son aged two out of the country, the father would not be allowed to see the child, it was appropriate for the court to refuse her leave to take the child out of the jurisdiction and to order that the child reside with the father and that the mother have contact with the child.

The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Hirst and Mr Justice Cazalet) so held on November 26 dismissing the appeal of the child's mother from an order of Judge O'Brien in Cambridge County Court on September 4, 1998 that the child reside with the father and have contact with the mother.

MR JUSTICE CAZALET said the parents were of Asian origin and had one son born in 1996.

For most of 1997 the child had lived in India with the mother's parents, who had refused to admit the father when he visited their house where the child was staying. As a result the father had brought wardship proceedings and the mother had brought the child back to England.

On the mother's application for a residence order and leave to remove the child from the jurisdiction, the judge had found her "less than candid" and "perfectly capable of telling untruths".

He had found that the father had been prevented by the mother's family. The judge had taken the view that there was a question of trust involved.

It was not open to the court to say that the judge was wrong or had not carried out the balancing exercise properly.

## Layout unhygienic

Oakley v Birmingham City Council

Justices were entitled to hold that the layout of premises as they would be used was so unhygienic as to constitute a statutory nuisance under section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

The Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Astill) so held on December 18 dismissing Birmingham City Council's appeal by case

stated from Birmingham Justices who, on April 24, 1998, found the council guilty of failing to abate a statutory nuisance: a council house let to the complainant, John Oakley, at 40 Hunslet Road, Quinton, Birmingham.

LORD JUSTICE SIMON BROWN said that the only lavatory was located in a compartment too small to contain a wash-hand basin, so that anyone using it was obliged, in order to wash his hands afterwards, either to use the kitchen sink or to pass through the kitchen and use a bathroom the other side.

Those premises were "in such a state as to be prejudicial to health" under section 79(1)(a) of the 1990 Act on the ground that the risk of cross-infection in the kitchen area was "significant and likely to cause injury, to health within the meaning of section 79(7), and therefore constituted a statutory nuisance."

The court was conscious of the wider implications of the finding, given that the council owned 20,000 similar properties built in 1930, and other authorities faced the same problem with their older housing stock.

But the layout of the premises, as they would predictably be used, was so unhygienic as to create precisely the class of risk of disease or illness to which section 79 was directed.

## Address satisfactory

DPP v McCarthy

The purpose of the requirement in section 70(2) of the Road Traffic Act 1988 that a driver of a vehicle give his name and address was to enable reasonably swift and easy communication between the parties for the purposes of identification and accident negotiations.

Whether the address of a third party satisfied the purpose of the section was a question of fact.

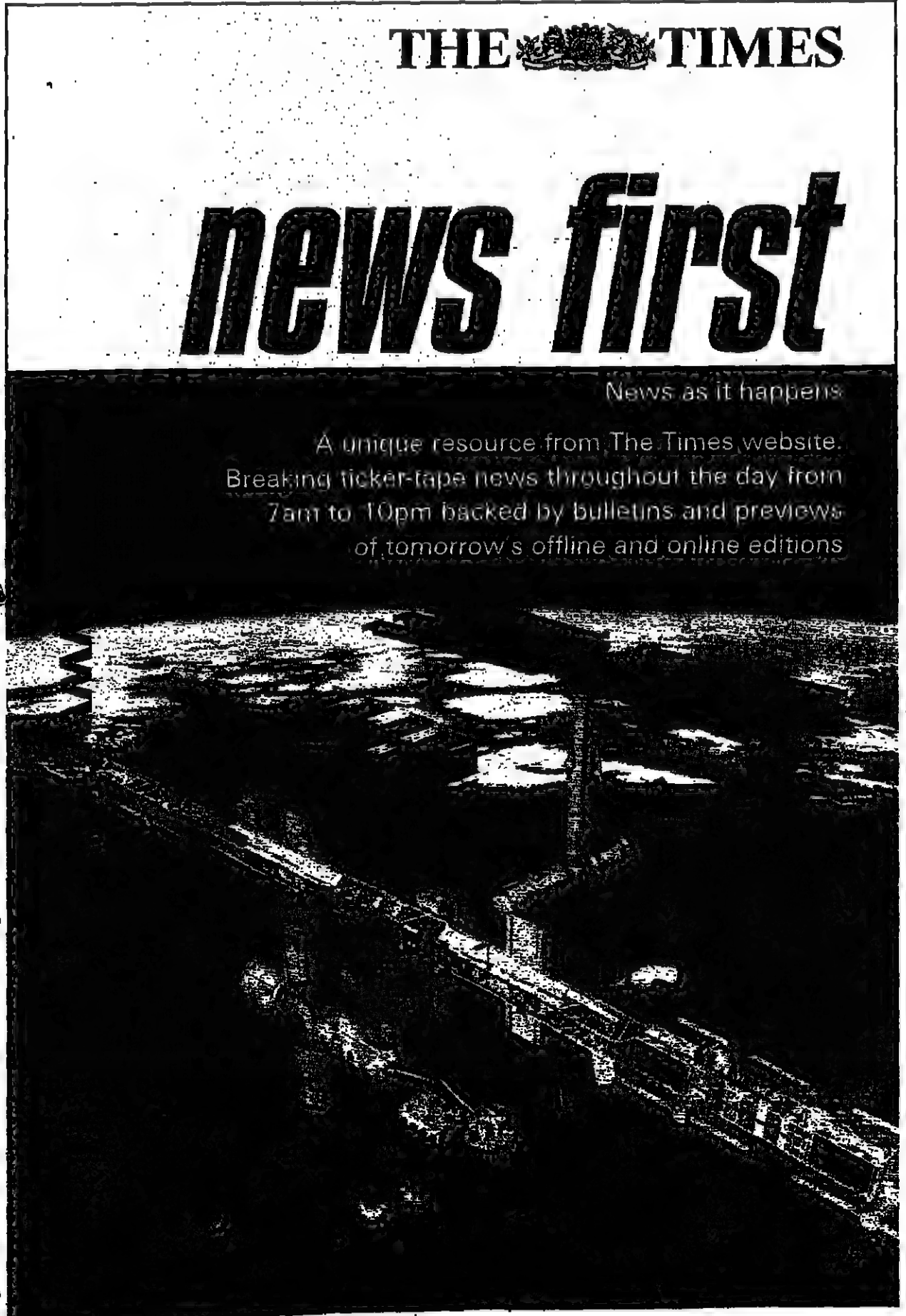
The Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Simon Brown and Mr Justice Astill) so held on December 14 when dismissing an appeal by the prosecution by way of case stated by Wood Green Crown Court (Judge J. Connor and two Justices) on August 25, 1998,

when it allowed the appeal of Kevin McCarthy having found that by providing the address of his solicitors he had satisfied the requirements of section 70(2).

MR JUSTICE ASTILL said that "address" was not defined in the section, no doubt because it was capable of attracting a number of epithets such as "home", "business", "residential" and so on.

An address was where a person could be addressed and the crown court had found, as a question of fact, that the respondent had satisfied the purposes of section 70(2) by giving the address of his solicitor.

His Lordship would not be inclined to change that decision.



THE TIMES

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## CRICKET

# Australia pair to be questioned on match-fixing claim

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN MELBOURNE

SHANE WARNE and Mark Waugh, the players implicated in the running story that has rocked Australian cricket, will be called as witnesses today at a public hearing in Melbourne. They will be questioned by an advocate acting on behalf of Salim Malik, the Pakistani batsman, who, they allege, offered them money to throw a match on a tour there five years ago.

It was revealed recently that the Australian pair received \$11,000 from an Indian bookmaker for disclosing details of pitch conditions on a tour of Sri Lanka earlier that year. They confessed later to the Australian Cricket Board (ACB), which took the money out of their pay packets but which did not make the matter public until journalists pressed them on the matter last month, four years after the encounter with the bookmaker.

Warne and Waugh have vigorously protested their innocence about the more impor-

tant question of alleged match-fixing and it is believed that there is no evidence to implicate them in anything more serious. It is widely felt that they behaved in a silly manner, were caught out and have paid the penalty for their folly — except on the sub-continent, of course, where people sense mischief.

How much will emerge from this hearing is hard to predict. The Pakistani judge who has presided over the investigation into alleged corruption in that country's cricket is ready to make his findings public and has informed Salim and Waugh that they can expect to be implicated for their alleged involvement.

Salim is the key figure, since it was he who, Waugh and Waugh allege, approached them in a Karachi hotel in October 1994 with the offer of money for throwing a Test match. Despite Salim and Waugh's protestations of inno-

cence, Salim may find it difficult to clear his name when all details have emerged from the Pakistani inquiry.

To make things even more prickly, Waugh has accepted the captaincy of Pakistan until after the World Cup, which is staged in England later this year. Waugh stood down after leading Pakistan to a 3-0 series victory over West Indies in 1997, claiming that death threats against his family in Lahore had made him reconsider his position.

Now, after the failure of Aamir Sohail to impose any sort of order on a team known for its fickleness and the recent defeat at home by Zimbabwe, the lowest Test nation, Waugh is back in the hot seat. It is the third time that he has been captain in his distinguished career and it is impossible to say, given the bizarre circumstances, that it will not be the last time that he does the job.

In a very public and deliberate act of goodwill, the ACB has appointed Waugh as the captain of the Australia one-day side for the triangular series involving England and Sri Lanka, which begins in Brisbane on Sunday. Steve Waugh, the regular captain, will miss the first two games with a thigh strain.

There is so much going on at the moment, with the various sub-plots titillating almost as much as the main tale, that nobody is sure how it will all end. It is doing cricket no good at all, so, when the Australian pair step into the room today, it is in their interests, and the game's, to be frank.

Waugh and Waugh have had a hard time of it of late, given a mixed reception by the Test crowds, who were not enormously impressed by their apparent lack of conviction, though both players have expressed their regret. It would be nice to move on, but one gets the impression that this story has developed a momentum that will take some stopping.

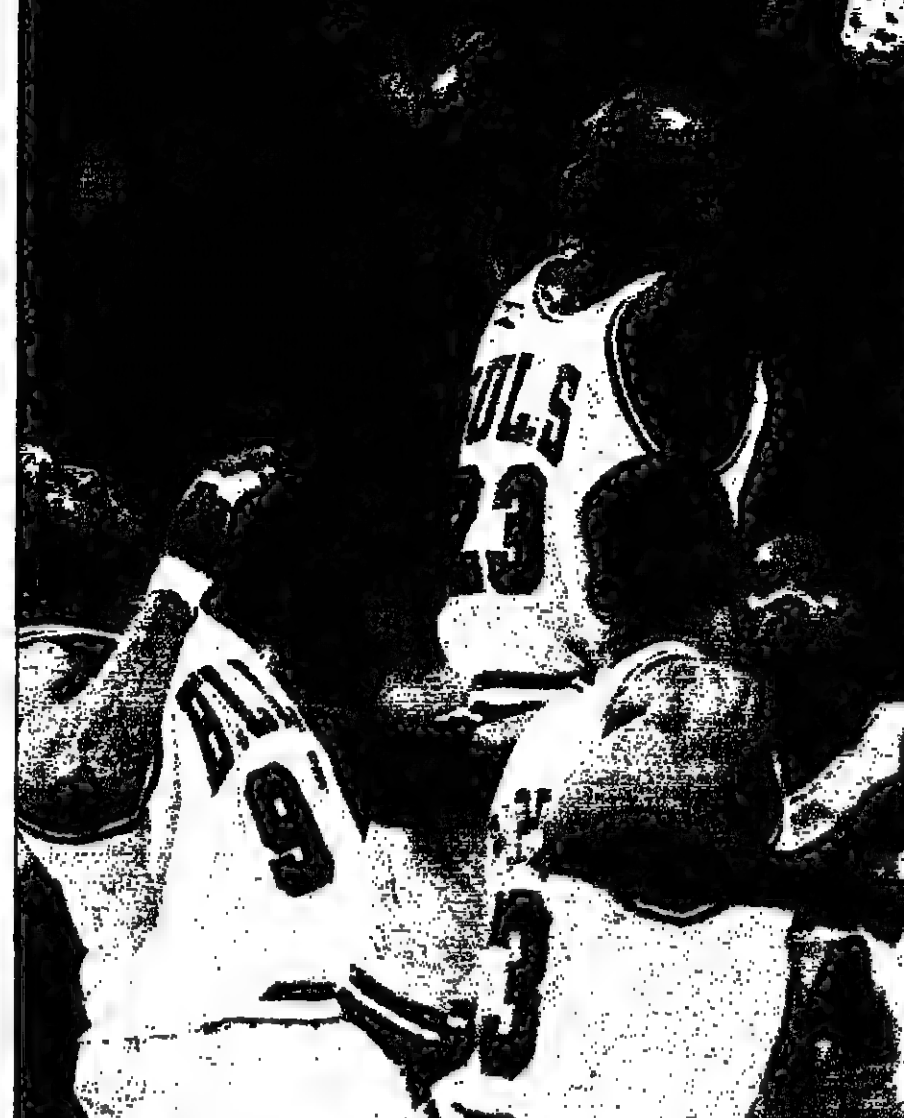
Hours after concluding a deal with the players' union of the National Basketball Association, David Stern, the NBA's abrasive commissioner, said to the television cameras: "Michael, if you're watching, please come back."

He was referring to Michael Jordan, the Chicago Bulls genius, who has had the game on tenterhooks since suggesting last July that the 1998 season would be his final one. His statements sprang mainly from disillusionment: the Bulls had dispensed with Phil Jackson, the coach, and Jordan said that he would play for no other team. Then he appeared to soften, saying that he would wait until the end of the NBA dispute to make a decision.

That has now happened. With suitable drama, agreement was reached at 6am on Wednesday, in a 25th-floor conference room in Manhattan. Sitting amid the debris of several half-eaten pizzas, the players and owners decided — after more than six months of ill-tempered opposition — that there was too much to lose on both sides. If the NBA's season had evaporated, it would have been the first professional sports league to lose a full schedule to a labour dispute.

The general view is that the owners won the battle. The players/workers — whose average wage of \$2.6 million makes them the highest-paid sportsmen in the world — were always the vulnerable party. The average wage is rather misleading, as it is bumped up by those who earn astronomical salaries: the median wage, a better reflection of most players' true worth, is a relatively modest \$1.3 million.

There is no denying that the players have been hit. Their battle of attrition, to which they took the owners to the brink, has yielded remarkably poor dividends. There will be no more \$100 million contracts. With the highest salaries now capped at \$14 million — no



Jordan shows why he commands such a huge salary, during the NBA finals last year.

other professional sport has a cap on individual salaries — the days of the gargantuan Kevin Garnett contract are over. Furthermore, players cannot opt out of contracts until after the fifth year and their teams still hold the right of first refusal after that fifth season. Under the old scheme, players could opt out after three years.

There are now heavy

restrictions on free-agent re-signings and no more "grandfather clauses". Players like Karl Malone, of the Utah Jazz, who was expecting a \$20 million-a-year deal by relying on a "carry-over" of the previous collective bargaining agreement, will not now be "grandfathered", to use the inelegant argot of the court. His new contract cannot start at more than \$14 mil-

lion for the first year. There are also new restrictions on player mobility. Previously, free agents could re-sign with their teams for one year and then be traded. Now, they must sign for a minimum of three years before being eligible for a trade.

Finally, there are new caps on annual salary increases. Players previously received a 20 per cent rise each year

‘If this version serves as a template for a leaner league, some good will have come’

Under the new deal, this will be 12 per cent. The shortened season will begin early next month, with each team playing about 50 games instead of the usual 82. The regular season ends in late April, when the play-offs — their make-up is unaffected — begin.

The shorter season, ironically, may prove to be better. The NBA schedule is bloated and farcical. In a normal season, only a handful of teams are eliminated before the play-offs — after nearly six months of basketball. If this year's version serves as a template for a leaner NBA league, some real good will have come from the dispute.

For their part, the fans are dusting off those season tickets and asking the sort of question that fans are entitled to ask. As *The New York Times* queried on its front page yesterday: "Will he be back?" Will Jordan return and lead the Bulls to their fourth consecutive NBA title? Yesterday, David Falk, his agent, said: "Michael is going to analyse the deal, see what Chicago wants to do and then make an informed decision. I'm not certain what his time-frame is."

Under the new agreement, Jordan will receive a 5 per cent rise on his salary last year of \$33 million. However, since the season is reduced, he would take home only \$18 million. Falk said: "He has to make whatever decision makes him happy and I'll support it."

The money is unlikely to be a big issue. *The Daily News* of New York, quoting sources close to the player, said that he is more receptive to the idea of a 45-50 game season than to the grind of an 82-game schedule.

However, the real clincher could be the "value added" to his endorsements — both present and future — from a final appearance on court. If he does play, prepare for him to be cast as a saviour by the media. Then, sit back and hear the cash registers tinkle.

## Stewart to return behind stumps

ALEC STEWART will return to wicketkeeping duties when he leads the England one-day team against Australia in the first match of the triangular series in Brisbane on Sunday.

Warren Hegg, of Lancashire, took over behind the stumps for the final two Ashes Tests as Stewart promoted himself to open the innings, but David Graveney, the chairman of selectors, is not concerned about Stewart combining the duties of wicketkeeper, specialist batsman and captain in one-day cricket.

"I don't envisage it being a problem," he said. "At Surrey, unless there are exceptional circumstances, he doesn't keep in four-day games but opens and keeps wicket in limited-overs. He doesn't mind."

However, Graveney said

that Stewart would be left out of the England side to play Queensland in a day-night game today to give him time to rest. "With the intensity of the last two Test matches, he just needs a couple of days to refocus his mind," Graveney said.

He added that the switch from day cricket to playing under lights was unlikely to cause a problem for England, who are not as accustomed to day-night cricket as Australia. "Probably our players have less exposure to floodlit cricket than most," Graveney said. "We don't have the permanent structures Australia have. The concept of having huge floodlights at Lord's might make a few people shake, but I don't think that will be a disadvantage."

Graveney said

## BOWLS: CHAMPIONS EDGE HOME AFTER ANOTHER MARATHON CONTEST

# Corsie stays the course into final

BY DAVID RHYS JONES

RICHARD CORSIE and Graham Robertson, of Scotland, the champions, reached the final of the world indoor pairs championship at Potters Leisure Resort on the Norfolk coast yesterday when they defeated Gary Smith and Andy Thomson in a five-set marathon, 7-1, 5-7, 7-6, 3-7, 7-4.

The crowd at Potters are getting their money's worth. The last three quarter-finals on Wednesday all went to the wire and the afternoon session, which started at 2pm, took more than 11 hours to complete. Although it was 1.10am

yesterday morning by the time that Steve Rees and John Price completed their 7-6, 3-7, 3-7, 7-5 victory over Tony Allcock and Mervyn King, there were still 60 brave souls sitting in the gallery — and, no, they were not asleep.

The first of the semi-finals — a repeat of the final last year — saw the initiative change hands time and time again. When the Scots won the first set at a canter and galloped into a 5-2 lead in the second, a straight-sets victory seemed to

be on the cards, but the English pair somehow managed to steal the second set. "From then on, it was anybody's game," Thomson said. "Gary played superbly in the second half, but Richard is in good form and did a lot of damage."

Smith was disappointed that he has failed to earn a place in the English international trials, which take place at Bournemouth this weekend. "How can they say someone who is provisionally ranked No 9 in the world is

not in the top 68 in England?" he asked.

Smith and Thomson led 3-1 in the deciding, but dropped a single and a disastrous four to trail 3-6. However, Thomson had a chance of claiming a count on the next end, but narrowly missed with an attempt to move the jack and had to settle for a single.

Corsie drew the winner on the next end, but left it almost a foot away from the jack, giving Thomson just enough room to slide through the gap between wood and jack with the last bowl of the game.

## SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Begin Bridge with *The Times*: Lesson 38 — No-Trump Responses

Last week I looked at responses of One of a Suit, but sometimes you don't have a four-card major to bid at the one level and must look for an alternative. A One No-Trump response shows 6-9 HCP and denies an intervening major suit of four cards or more.

Here are some examples of a One No-Trump response to a One Heart opening:

(A) ♠ Q103 (B) ♠ 55 (C) ♠ KJ5  
♥ 762 ♥ 62 ♥ 3  
♦ A95 ♦ Q8883 ♦ QJ743  
♣ 9854 ♣ A1054 ♣ J1087

Hand (A) is a perfect One No-Trump response, completely balanced with 8 HCP. If partner rebids in a suit to show an unbalanced hand you will know he has five or more hearts and that you have at least an eight-card fit there.

Hand (B) is a minimum with 6 HCP. Don't worry that you have just two little spades. A One No-Trump response doesn't promise stoppers in all the other suits.

Hand (C) is a maximum. Don't worry about holding a singleton heart. A One No-Trump response doesn't promise a balanced hand.

What would you bid on the following hands after the One Heart opening?

(D) ♠ KJ4 (E) ♠ AQ65 (F) ♠ KJ5  
♥ 874 ♥ 372 ♥ Q104  
♦ A105 ♦ C108 ♦ A08  
♣ Q106 ♣ K107 ♣ Q1076

You will notice that all these hands are too strong for a One No-Trump response. With Hand (D) respond Two No-Trumps, showing 11-12 HCP and a balanced hand. This balanced hand should not contain a four-card spade suit though, so with Hand (E) you are better to start with One Spade. Hand (F) is stronger still. This time you cannot risk missing game with your 14 HCP, so you jump straight to Three No-Trumps.

All the three hands above contain three-card support for hearts. After these jump bids in no-trumps partner, with a five-card major, needs to know whether to choose his suit or no-trumps as the final denomination. He cannot do this very easily unless he knows how many hearts you have. It is best to have the agreement that these jumps show three-card support for hearts.

[You can get a copy of any lesson from this beginners' course by sending two 20p stamps per lesson (or five stamps per set of five) to Sally Brock, 73 Totterside Lane, High Wycombe, Bucks HP13 7QA. Don't forget to state which ones you want.]

## KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Sokolov wins

Ivan Sokolov has won the Hastings tournament with a round to spare, scoring an unassailable six points. With only one round remaining, none of his rivals has more than 4.5.

White: James Plaskett  
Black: Sergei Shipov  
Hastings Premier 1999

Stilian Defence

1 e4 c5  
2 Nc3 d6  
3 f4 Nc6  
4 Nf3 g6  
5 Bb5 Bg7  
6 O-O Bg7  
7 d3 a6  
8 Bb5 Bc6  
9 Nf1 Kc7  
10 Qa2 f5  
11 Nf5 Rf8  
12 Ng5 Nf6  
13 Nf6 Qc7  
14 Nd4 Bc7  
15 Ne5 Qc8  
16 f5 Rg8  
17 Nf6 exd3  
18 exd3 Qd8  
19 Ng5 Bg7  
20 g7 Bg7  
21 Bg5 Bf8  
22 Ra1 Rf7  
23 Rd5 exd6  
24 Nc5+ Kd8  
25 Nc7 Bc7  
26 Qe7+ Kc7  
27 Nd5+ Black resigns

Diagram of final position

Keene online

You can send me your queries, puzzles, problems and games direct by e-mail. The address is keenechess@aol.com. The best contributions from *Times* readers will be published either here or in the Saturday *Times* Weekend column.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

Black to play. This is from the 1988 Ublava — Georgiev game. Black can win but must deal with White's check. However, 1... Kf6 allows 2 Ng6+ and Black must return to g6. To win Black had to try 1... Kf6 but played Kf7 and was shocked by the reply. What was it? Solution on page 50

## LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

0171-782 7344

## LEGAL NOTICES

No. 070223 of 1998

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a

petition for the winding up of the

company named in the schedule

has been presented to the

Court for the winding up of the

company named in the schedule

has been presented to the

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## INSURANCE COMPANIES ACT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a

petition for the winding up of the

company named in the schedule

has been presented to the

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company named in the schedule

has been presented to the

Court for the winding up of the

company named in the schedule

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# Discarded clubs plan to disrupt new competition

TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Leicester	14	11	0	3	423	238	22
Northampton	15	11	0	4	409	328	22
Saracens	16	10	1	5	476	335	21
Wasps	16	9	1	6	445	314	19
Newcastle	15	9	0	6	414	352	18
London Irish	16	9	0	7	393	368	18
Hartpools	14	9	0	5	373	349	18
Bath	15	8	0	7	381	317	16
Gloucester	18	8	0	8	335	341	16
Richmond	13	7	0	6	340	351	14
London Scot	15	5	0	10	286	365	10
Sale	16	5	0	11	376	468	10
Bedford	16	2	0	14	330	526	4
W Hertfordsp	15	2	0	13	228	558	4

The Union has collated suggestions from clubs regarding the group's brief, but both Murrayfield and club sources suggest that Lord Mackay will be granted licence to make his review as wide-reaching as he sees fit.











# So when did your wife stop beating you?

The flyer that fluttered out of our bundle of daily papers yesterday morning yelled: "Scared to go home to your wife tonight?" Evidently Channel 4's marketing wizards felt they were onto something juicy with last night's *Dispatches* on battered men and went for the hard sell.

This approach puts the series at one end of a spectrum which runs through *Neighbours* (or *Coronation Street*) past the bawling barge balloons of *The Jerry Springer Show* to the grotesque theatre of American wrestling. This is a shame, because there is much more to this serious, well-intentioned series than gawping at emotional incoherence.

But you can feel the boys in suits with the ratings print-outs breathing down their necks all the way through the programme. The conventions of "X-wishes-to-remain-anonymous" documentaries have always teetered on the

ludicrous. The 1960s pioneers *Man Alive* made heavy use of silhouetted figures, mumbling their shame in bare studios. (This was nicely satirised by Monty Python in an exposé of men whose secret vice was to dress up as mice and attend illegal cheese parties.)

Last night's speciality was a thin strip of light across the eyes, which was particularly dramatic when the poor fellows started to cry. Except that a nasty little Sergeant Major in the back of my brain kept shouting "Pull yourself together, you big girly blower!" (This reaction, presumably, is precisely why some of the witnesses wished to remain anonymous.) All the other ingredients were there, including the plangent piano music and the tone of hushed gravity from reporter Deborah Davies.

A more serious fault is the front-loading of the programme, so that far more time is spent on the fun part, describing and detailing the

abuse, than making much serious attempt at analysis or explanation. Let alone discussing possible solutions. The line between earnest social concern and voyeuristic sensationalism is a very fine one, which the series seems increasingly willing to cross.

But then the *Dispatches* team does have a knack of unearthing disturbing and often unexpected social problems and we should be grateful that anybody is giving them an airing at all. The programme was inspired by the arrival of a "flood" of letters from men, following devastating documentaries last autumn on violence against women.

Strategic advertising for victims produced 140 responses, of which about 100 were deemed to be valid. These respondents were sent questionnaires, which produced some horrific evidence: testicle stamping, knife-attacks and an



Paul Hoggart

attempted smothering. Many assaults occurred while the man was sleeping, including slapping an ankle with a hammer, pouring bleach on genitalia and jabbing a hair-grip down an ear.

Two women batterers were interviewed. One was very remorseful, the other not particularly so. Neither could really explain why they did it. There were issues of jealousy, frustration and an

overwhelming need to control, all echoes male violence against women. A correlation was suggested with experiences of violence in earlier life. If men didn't fight back, that seemed to make it worse. Intriguing issues, but that's another programme, which I don't suppose will be made.

No doubt some would claim that big, strapping men, including a serving police officer, getting bashed by their wives and girlfriends is an example of the top-down world created by women's liberation. Except that as the programme repeatedly reminded us, these hair-ripping crotch-kickers are less than a tenth as numerous as their male counterparts.

And I expect they were at it in Saxon times, when men were men and children died young. The archaeological series *Meet The Ancestors* (BBC2) returned with a splendid new find to interpret: the well-preserved skeletons of an

Anglo-Saxon warrior and his horse, surrounded by the graves of small children.

I once spent a weekend or two with Regia Anglorum, the re-enactment group which specialises in Saxon and Viking warriors. They greet these discoveries with a mixture of excitement and trepidation, in case the skeleton shows they have been holding their spears the wrong way.

Fortunately the body under the former baseball field at the USAF base at Lakenheath simply showed how they used to attach their horses' bridles. X-rays also indicated how the sword was made. This involved spiral twists of iron and 79 different strips of iron. It was beautiful and impressive.

The poor horse buried with his master was probably lame from arthritis in a rear ankle and had a depressed fracture of the skull from a pole-axe blow or some such. I

expect the warrior's wife did that when the horse was asleep. They were buried surrounded by the graves of children, which presenter Julian Richards found touching, an indication that he was protecting them in death as in life. This naive assumption a *Dispatches* investigation would soon dispel.

"Knock, knock, knock" go the Customs officers before bursting into action. "Who's there?" we reply. "Ivan!" "Ivan who?" "Ivan Improbable!" The Knock (ITV) returned for a new series with a breathless yarn involving hit-men, revenge, assassinations and pot-smoking smuggling from Russia to South Africa via London. The series belongs to a tradition of British television drama trying to be an action adventure film (remember *The Professionals*?) and looking faintly ludicrous. I look forward to a series on the Inland Revenue's crack Outstanding Tax Assessment Recovery Squad.

- BBC1**
- 6.40am Faces of Islam (T) (3824088)
  - 6.00am Business Breakfast (70872)
  - 7.00am Breakfast News (T) (49779)
  - 9.00am Kilroy (T) (8807205)
  - 9.45am The Vanessa Show (T) (5271075)
  - 10.55am News; Regional News; Weather (T) (7146088)
  - 11.00am Real Rooms (7156446)
  - 11.25am Can't Cook, Won't Cook (T) (7126205)
  - 11.55am News; Regional News; Weather (T) (7146088)
  - 12.00pm Cliff May's Bluff (87040)
  - 1.20pm One O'Clock News; Weather (T) (42905)
  - 1.30pm News; Weather (8803205)
  - 1.40pm Neighbours Wedge and Wedge offer Lou an olive branch (T) (6510021)
  - 2.05pm Inside An Idealistic youngster is snatched by a radical group bargaining for the release of one of their members. With Raymond Burr (T) (7803595)
  - 2.55pm Going for a Song (8798750)
  - 3.20pm The Weather Show (T) (2129601)
  - 3.25pm Children's BBC: Playdays (8924250)
  - 3.45pm Spider (1244671) 3.50pm Smart on the Road (8630663) 4.00pm Rugsby (8793683)
  - 4.30pm L & F Friday (1665866) 4.55pm Newsround (1257311) 5.10pm Peter (7532021)
  - 5.35pm Neighbours (T) (8190404)
  - 6.00pm Six O'Clock News; Weather (T) (359)
  - 6.30pm Regional News Magazine (311)
  - 7.00pm Celebrity Ready, Steady, Cook! New series. EastEnders' Sid Owen and Richard Driscoll, better known as Ricky Butler and vicar Alex John chaps Ross Burden and Tony Tobin (T) (7408)
  - 7.30pm Top of the Pops. The week's chart-toppers, featuring the UK's number one single (T) (338)
  - 8.00pm Vets in Practice. Joe faces a tricky operation to amputate a lion's leg, while Emma has an ethical dilemma over a much-loved family cat (2/10) (T) (8156)
  - 8.30pm A Question of Sport Quiz, presented by Sue Barker (T) (5953)
  - 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (T) (8427)
  - 9.30pm [CRUISE] Parkinson. New series of celebrity interviews starting with the former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell, comedian Dawn French and the ubiquitous television presenter Carol Vorderman (T) (502408)
  - 10.25pm Bird on a Wire (1980) Mel Gibson and Goldie Hawn star in this frantic comedy chase. Thriller as ex-lovers relentlessly pursued by the police, FBI and a team of ruthless assassins. Directed by John Badham (T) (872068)
  - 12.10pm The Stand-Up Show With rising star Dan Antopolski (5125557)
  - 12.40pm The Big End. New series. Simon Mayo takes a look at some bizarre beliefs in pre-millennial Britain (T) (819847)
  - 1.10pm The Beast in the Cellar (1970) A series of murders are committed in Lancashire, prompting rumours of a savage beast inhabiting the local woods. Thriller starring Flora Robson and Beryl Reid. Directed by James Kelly (T) (2868373)
  - 2.30pm Weather (4970625)
  - 2.35pm BBC News 24 (2150803)

- BBC2**
- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Hairy Jeremy (594333) 7.05pm Teletubbies (2150404) 7.30pm Yogi's Treasure Hunt (2545427) 7.50pm Short Change (3020392) 8.20pm Taz-Mania (8088382) 8.40pm Polka Dot Shorts (3124917) 8.55pm Hairy Jeremy (849814) 9.00pm Johnson and Friends (7233333) 9.10pm The Phil Saver Show (6601337) 9.35pm The Phil Saver Show (6601337) 10.00pm Children's BBC: Teletubbies (56755) 10.30pm FILM: Stride the Sailor (6542334) 12.20pm The Art (8119801) 12.30pm Working Lunch (10866)
  - 1.00pm Johnson and Friends (7233333) 1.10pm The Arts and Crafts Hour. Japanese-style pottery and designing invitations for any occasion (2826392)
  - 2.10pm Darts: World Professional Championship Yesterday's sets (28810458)
  - 6.00pm The Simpsons: A German film takes over the nuclear plant (T) (870427)
  - 6.20pm The Simpsons: Bart mixes with the Mob (T) (874243)
  - 6.45pm Robot Wars: Craig Charles and Philippe Forrester - present more motorised mayhem (T) (829156)
  - 7.15pm Electric Circus. Entertainment magazine, presented by Claire from Steps (T) (794953)
  - 7.30pm [CRUISE] Country House. New series charting a year's activities at one of England's grandest stately homes, Woburn Abbey (T) (137)
  - 8.00pm Gardening from Scratch. Laying out and planting up a vegetable plot, renovating a garden pond and a guide to drought-loving plants (2/8) (T) (4738)
  - 8.30pm [CRUISE] Garden Stories. New series focusing on Britons and their gardens (T) (3205)

- HTV**
- 5.30am ITN Morning News (83934)
  - 6.00am GMTV (822330)
  - 9.25pm The Morning (T) (264156)
  - 10.25pm The Morning (T) (264156)
  - 12.15pm ITN News and Weather (T) (587779)
  - 12.30pm ITN Lunchtime News; Weather (T) (3232)
  - 12.55pm ITN Crimestoppers (5858586)
  - 1.00pm Shortland Street. Ruth returns with a vengeance (37934)
  - 1.30pm Home and Away. Tegan gives Joy an ultimatum (T) (43779)
  - 2.00pm The Jerry Springer Show (T) (2037885)
  - 2.45pm Dale's Supermarket Sweep (T) (211088)
  - 3.15pm ITN News Headlines (T) (2124155)
  - 3.25pm HTV News (T) (2121089)
  - 3.25pm HTV: Mopop's Shop (2104382) 3.35pm Timbuctoo (8210885) 3.40pm Animal Stories (5291750) 3.50pm Adam's Family Tree (855717) 4.20pm Gladiators: Train 2 Win (8730576) 4.30pm Top Ten of Everything (8330340)
  - 5.10pm A Country Practice. A neighbourly dispute ends in tragedy (784558)
  - 5.40pm ITN Early Evening News (T) (424021)
  - 6.00pm Home and Away. Tegan gives Joy an ultimatum (T) (43779)
  - 6.25pm HTV Weather (537304)
  - 6.30pm The West Tonight (T) (779)
  - 7.00pm Bruce's Price is Right (T) (2576)
  - 7.30pm Coronation Street. Tegan has Lee over a barrel (T) (663)
  - 8.00pm Who Wants to Be a Millionaire? Big-price game show (T) (124)
  - 8.30pm Neighbours from Hell (T) (7588)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except:
  - 12.20-12.30pm Central News (6113427)
  - 1.00pm Wish You Were Here? (37334)
  - 1.30pm The Jerry Springer Show (9135682)
  - 2.15-2.45pm Home and Away (212171)
  - 3.20-3.25pm Central News (2121089)
  - 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street (7856458)
  - 6.25-7.00pm Central News; Weather (636156)
  - 10.30-10.40pm Central News; Weather (678243)
  - 1.30pm Tales from the Crypt (23243)
  - 12.00pm Short Story Cinema (1657002)
  - 12.40pm FILM: Revolver (78002)
  - 2.15pm Box Office America (9133441)
  - 2.40pm SeaQuest DSX (8050793)
  - 3.35pm The Haunted FishTank (1425255)
  - 4.05pm Central Jinx '99 (8156638)
  - 5.20-5.30pm Asian Eye (4440793)
- As HTV West except:
- 12.15pm Westcountry News (597779)
  - 12.27-12.30pm Illuminations (6121446)
  - 1.00pm Westcountry Update (37934)
  - 1.30pm The Jerry Springer Show (9135682)
  - 2.15-2.45pm Home and Away (212171)
  - 3.20-3.25pm Westcountry News (2121089)
  - 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away (7856458)
  - 6.25-7.00pm Westcountry Life (15311)
  - 10.30-10.40pm Westcountry News (578243)
  - 11.30-1.35pm FILM: Twilight Zone (52044972)
- As HTV West except:
- 12.15-12.30pm Meridian News (597779)
  - 5.10-5.40pm Home and Away
  - 6.10-6.15pm Meridian Tonight (15311)
  - 10.30-10.40pm Meridian News (578243)
  - 11.30pm FILM: In Pursuit of Honor (52044972)
  - 5.00-5.30pm Freescreen (31712)
- As HTV West except:
- 12.20-12.30pm Anglia News (6113427)
  - 1.00-1.35pm Upshot (1405705)
  - 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street
  - 6.25-7.00pm Anglia News (636156)
  - 10.30-10.40pm Anglia News (678243)
  - 11.30pm FILM: In Pursuit of Honor (52044972)

- CHANNEL 4**
- 8.00am Sesame Street (33682)
  - 7.00pm The Big Breakfast (55717)
  - 9.00pm The Cosby Show (T) (6128263)
  - 9.35pm I Can Get It for You Wholesale (1851)
  - Comedy drama, starring Susan Hayward. (T) (8133665)
  - 11.10pm Roots to Success (6623243)
  - 11.25pm Collectors' Lot (7794717)
  - 11.30pm Here's One I Made Earlier (T) (7530)
  - 12.00pm Sesame Street (70750)
  - 12.30pm Bewitched (T) (93214)
  - 1.00pm Pet Rescue. The RSPCA (T) (35576)
  - 1.30pm Earthquake. The antiser (T) (7507750)
  - 1.55pm The Wrong Man (1957) A family man is accused of being a notorious armed robber. Fact-based (T) (2039655)
  - 3.30pm Hampton Court Palace. Assistant curator Jonathan Foyle questions the long-held belief that Henry VIII built the Great Hall's oriel window (T) (885)
  - 4.00pm Fifteen-to-One Highlights (T) (392)
  - 4.30pm Countdown (T) (1856576)
  - 4.55pm Ricki Lake. Gay couples (T) (4967934)
  - 5.30pm Pet Rescue Roadshow. An injured fox is treated (T) (156)
  - 6.00pm TFI Friday With Kathy Burke, Vic Reeves and Bob Mortimer (13953)
  - 7.00pm Channel 4 News (T) (468897)
  - 7.55pm Cuban Faces. Jorge visits his god-daughter. Last in series (5/5) (T) (941069)
  - 8.00pm The Lost Gardens of Heligan. The restoration of the famous Cornish gardens (1/6) (T) (9866)
  - 8.30pm Brookside. Niamh is devastated by Sinbad's decision (T) (1601)
  - 9.00pm Frasier. Frasier Chandler gets trapped in a bank's cashpoint lobby together with a stunning model (T) (6137)
  - 9.30pm Streetwise. Davina McCall visits Dublin and Greenwich to match-make single people (T) (25798)
  - 10.00pm Frasier. New series. Frasier experiences a wide range of emotions as he struggles to cope with unemployment (T) (88779)
  - 10.30pm Eurotrash. Unconventional beauty contests (T) (809243)
  - 11.45pm Ring of the Hill. New series. Has Hank survived the gas explosion? (T) (979791)

- CHANNEL 5**
- 6.00am 5 News and Sport (7035855)
  - 7.00pm Wildlife. Part one. The life and work of Charles Darwin (T) (9130088)
  - 7.30pm Milkshake! (6746361)
  - 7.35pm Winkles' House (T) (9854601)
  - 8.00pm Hunkaloze (T) (1294392)
  - 8.30pm Dappledawn Farm (1293663)
  - 9.00pm Floyd Unhooked (T) (7207175)
  - 9.25pm Russell Grant (T) (4823330)
  - 9.30pm The Oprah Winfrey Show (653137)
  - 10.20pm Sunset Beach. Ben rescues Maria (T) (2251885)
  - 11.10pm Leeza (T) (213131)
  - 12.00pm 5 News at Noon (T) (1204779)
  - 12.30pm Family Affairs. Chris makes a stunning announcement (T) (9070408)
  - 1.00pm The Bold and the Beautiful. Maggie's actions disgust James (T) (919558)
  - 1.30pm The Roseanne Show. The comedienne chafes to actress Kristie Alley (8007797)
  - 2.00pm 100 Per Cent Gold (5400779)
  - 2.30pm Good Afternoon. Daily entertainment, featuring dramatic tales in Liverpool. Mums and antiques expert Eric Knowles. 5 News Update (4882243)
  - 3.30pm Can You Feel Me Dancing? (1986)
  - Moving drama about a young blind woman's attempts to gain independence from her over-protective father (796934)
  - 5.20pm Sunset Beach (T) (6215663)
  - 6.00pm 100 Per Cent Gold (5351088)
  - 6.30pm Family Affairs. James blames his mother for the divorce (T) (5335040)
  - 7.00pm 5 News; Weather (T) (6494595)
  - 7.30pm Champions of the Wild. Profile of koea lover Steve Phillips (T) (5331224)
  - 8.00pm Was It Good for You? Travel with Alisa Greenhalgh (1/14) (6403243)

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- For further listings see Saturday's Vision**
- SKY ONE**
- 7.00am Countdown (89137) 7.20pm The Chris Evans Breakfast Show (46408) 8.30pm Hollywood Squares (25224) 9.00pm Sally Jessy Raphael (55311) 9.30pm The Chris Evans Show (81185) 1.00pm Gully (7392) 12.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 1.40pm Midsommer (89137) 2.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 3.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 3.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 4.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 4.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 5.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 5.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 6.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 6.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 7.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 7.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 12.00pm Jerry Jones (40021)
- SKY BOX OFFICE**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 2 (Transponder 60)**
- 7.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 7.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 12.00pm Jerry Jones (40021)
- SKY BOX OFFICE 3 (Transponder 58)**
- 7.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 7.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 12.00pm Jerry Jones (40021)
- SKY BOX OFFICE 4 (Transponder 58)**
- 7.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 7.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 8.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 9.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 10.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.00pm Jerry Jones (40021) 11.30pm Jerry Jones (40021) 12.00pm Jerry Jones (40021)
- SKY BOX OFFICE 5 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 6 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 8 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 9 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 10 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 11 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 12 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 13 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 15 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 16 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 17 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 18 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 19 (Transponder 58)**
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- SKY BOX OFFICE 20 (Transponder 58)**
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